A Literary Genre Approach to Biblical Interpretation and Instruction

for the Chinese American Church

A Professional Project

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the Faculty of the

Claremont School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment

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Doctor of Ministry
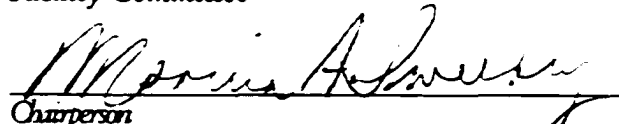
by

Dora Lau Wang

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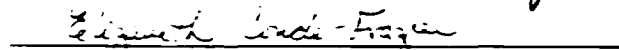
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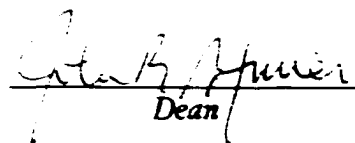of the requirements for the degree of*

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ABSTRACT

A Literary Genre Approach to Biblical Interpretation and Instruction

for the Chinese American Church

by Dora Lau Wang

To address the problem of ineffective Bible teaching in the Chinese American Church, the thesis of this project is that her effectiveness in Bible teaching can be increased by training teachers to interpret the biblical text according to its literary genre; apply the biblical message to Chinese American learners in light of the goal of Christian education; and teach the Bible lesson that aims at life changes.

This project demonstrates a three-step process for training teachers to deal with three sample Bible passages. The first step, covered in Chapter 2, is to interpret the text by analyzing its literary characteristics as well as its literary and historical contexts. The second, discussed in Chapter 3, is to explore the goal of Christian education and the learners' life experience, and to establish a process for applying the biblical message accordingly. The last, covered in Chapter 4, deals with teaching the Bible lesson by examining theories of learning as well as principles and methods of teaching, and designing a teaching/learning process compatible with literary genres and the goal of Christian education.

The approach of this project results in identifying a theological theme and message for each of the three sample passages explored, applying its message to address issues relevant to the life experience of Chinese Americans, and designing a sample lesson plan for each of the three literary genres represented by the passages: the Narrative, the Wisdom and the Prophetic. It is hoped that by so training teachers for a more effective Bible teaching ministry, the Chinese American Church may be nurtured toward reaching the goal of Christian education, i.e. persons may engage in a continuous process of conforming to the image of Christ in life and in mission.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my thanks to Claremont School of Theology for offering a fine Doctor of Ministry program that equips me to integrate Biblical Studies in the Old Testament with Christian Education, for the ministry of training teachers for Bible interpretation and teaching in Chinese American churches. I am especially grateful for my two advisors, Professor Marvin Sweeney and Professor Elizabeth Conde-Frazier for their challenge and guidance both in course works and in this Doctor of Ministry project. My appreciation also goes to Ms. Elaine Walker for working on the form and style of this manuscript despite her tight schedule, and to Dr. Karen Dalton for coordinating the Doctor of Ministry program.

I am indebted to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Westminster Theological Seminary for my former training in Christian Education and Biblical Studies respectively, which lays the foundation for this project. My thanks also go to Cumberland Presbyterian Chinese Church of San Francisco, First Chinese Baptist Church of Los Angeles, San Diego Bible Church, Chinese Church in Christ of San Jose, Grace Church of Singapore, Singapore Bible College and the North America Campus of China Evangelical Seminary, for providing me the field experience in equipping Bible teachers for the building up of the body of Christ. I also appreciate the 11 Chinese American churches for taking part in the survey.

In the past few years when my residence was in Singapore, my siblings in Los Angeles as well as brothers and sisters in two fellowship groups in Singapore have rendered much support and prayers throughout my engagement in this program, which required my traveling across the Pacific during alternate semesters. To them and to my husband Dr. John Ling-fai Wang, who is most supportive in all my ministries and academic endeavors, I owe my heartfelt gratitude. I am also grateful to my pastor Dr. Timothy Lin for being the first to instill in me a passion for the Word of God, and my late parents, Mr. Wing Hon Lau and Mrs. Grace Lau, for offering me the freedom and encouragement to pursue my passions ever since I was a child. Finally, it is to God who called me and continues to equip me for the ministry of His Word that I dedicate this project.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Problem Addressed by the Project

This project addresses the problem of ineffective Bible teaching in the Chinese American Church.

Importance of the Problem

Having served in the field of Christian education in various evangelical Chinese American churches, Bible School and seminary extensions for over twenty years, the author of this project has observed the urgent need to train Bible teachers for more effective teaching ministry. The following are some of the observations from her ministry experience over the years, substantiated by the results of a survey conducted during the last six months of 100 teachers, who represent 11 Chinese American churches and adult Sunday School departments of 1855 learners.[1]

The evangelical Chinese American churches are blessed with adult professionals who are enthusiastic and serious about Bible teaching and learning. The survey shows an average of 41% of adult congregation members attend Sunday School classes, and most teachers are willing to receive training for the task (see Table 1).

Table 1: Kind of Training Received by Teachers (shown in percentage)
(data extracted from #4 of Appendix A)

OT Survey	NT Survey	Basic Theology	Inductive Bible study	Teaching Methods	Age Group Characteristics
68	73	37	69	67	35

Since many of the adults have engaged in campus Bible study groups during their college days, the survey shows that 69% of teachers have received training in inductive Bible study method, the dominant method used in campus Bible study fellowships. In Chinese American churches, among the most popular Bible courses offered are the Old Testament survey and the New Testament

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[1] See survey data tabulated in Appendix A.

survey, which most teachers have taken (68% and 73% respectively). Apart from these two, churches usually provide teacher training courses in teaching methods, basic theology and age group characteristics, which 67%, 37% and 35% of teachers have taken respectively. A common phenomenon observed is that many churches have plans to cover all the books of the Bible in their adult Sunday School curriculum,[2] and teachers are brave enough to tackle some of the most difficult books such as the law and the prophets and the book of Revelation.[3] But judging from the type and frequency of Bible study resources used (Table 2), the kind of training they have received (Table 1), and from their own perception of need for further training,[4] teachers can use some help in doing so effectively.

Table 2: Type and Frequency of Resources Used
(data extracted from #6 of Appendix A)
Upper row: percentage of teachers using the resource just about weekly
Lower row: percentage of teachers never or rarely using the resource

Curriculum	Commentary	Concordance	Bible Dictionary
48	37	22	17
33	30	41	52

The survey shows that only 48% of the teachers use curriculum material on a weekly basis; whereas a significant percentage of them never or rarely (less than once a quarter) use resources such as the commentary (30%), the concordance (41%) and the Bible dictionary (52%). Since most of them are only familiar with the inductive Bible study method, and some of them have additional training in just the general principles in hermeneutics, special interpretation skills in dealing with the various literary genres such as the narratives, the prophetic books and wisdom literature are needed to better equip them for teaching the whole counsel of God.

Another issue that must be addressed in Chinese American churches is that on applying truth to life. While evangelical Christians regard the Word of God as the spiritual milk by which

[2] Appendix A. #2.
[3] Ibid. #1a and 1b.
[4] Ibid. #10.

they are nurtured to maturity in the Lord (1 Pet 2:2), Bible teaching and learning in many Chinese

American churches have not been successful in helping learners to do so. As reflected in Table 3

below, the survey shows that most application focuses on issues related to general Christian

living, with 48% of teachers never or rarely address specific issues relevant to Chinese

Americans, and 33% never or rarely address issues related to Gospel outreach, including social

justice and compassion.

Table 3: Kind and Frequency of Issue Addressed in Application
(data extracted from #7 of Appendix A)
Upper row: percentage of teachers addressing the issue just about weekly
Lower row: percentage of teachers never or rarely (less than once a quarter) addressing the issue

Christian Living	Chinese American	Christian Mission
66	9	6
11	48	33

The published curriculum is not helpful with regards to Chinese American issues, since materials

in English are written for the majority American population, and those in Chinese are written for

local Chinese communities in Southeast Asia where they are published. The survey also reflects

that the nature of class assignments are not conducive to real life application as seen in Table 4:

Table 4: Nature and Frequency of Student Assignment
(data extracted from #8 of Appendix A)
Upper row: percentage of teachers giving the kind of assignment just about weekly
Lower row: percentage of teachers never or rarely giving the kind of assignment

Reading	Writing	Action	Reflection	Memory Work
35	5	11	23	12
30	76	52	38	51

Since 52% of the teachers never or rarely give assignments that involve action; and 38% never or

rarely give those that involve reflection and 76% writing, the potential of the Bible lesson

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appealing to the affective or volitional aspects of learning that is necessary for life changes to take place is greatly reduced. In addition, due to the fact that interactive learning such as the small group discussion are not prevalently employed (see Table 5), there is a lack of community built into the classroom to nurture or to make learners accountable for carrying out what they learn in class. By appealing only to the cognitive or mental aspect of learning, Bible teaching and learning can become merely a mental exercise, without making much of an impact on the lives of the people. Therefore, training is needed to better equip teachers to relate biblical messages to life.

The last issue relevant to effective teaching involves the actual teaching methods used in the classroom. Perhaps due to their evangelical church background, school experience (especially those who had their high school and college education in Southeast Asia) and professional training, usually in the fields of engineering and technology, the Chinese Americans' concept of Bible teaching involves primarily the transfer of Bible content material. As a result, the lecture becomes the dominant, if not the only teaching method for most teachers (see Table 5 below).

Table 5: Kind and Frequency of Teaching Methods Used
(data extracted from #5 of Appendix A)
Upper row: percentage of teachers using the method just about weekly
Lower row: percentage of teachers never or rarely using the method

Lecture	Close-end Discussion	Open-end Discussion	Case Study	Skit	Debate	Student Presentation	Small Group Discussion
66	27	6	12	0	1	3	13
4	34	59	49	90	92	68	45

Even though 67% of the teachers have had training in teaching methods (Table 1), the survey as reflected in Table V shows that about half or more of the teachers never or rarely employ methods that demand more creative and active participation from learners, which enhances learning. These include small group discussion (45%), case study (49%), open-ended discussion of which the learners draw conclusions without a pre-determined goal set by the teacher (59%), student presentation (68%), skit (90%) and debate (92%). Even with the second most frequently used close-ended discussion, of which the teacher leads the learners toward a pre-determined

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goal, 34% of teachers never or rarely use it. It is therefore necessary to convince them of the need and to equip them with the skills to employ appropriate teaching methods for greater effectiveness in teaching.

With seminary training in Biblical Studies and Christian Education, it is the intention of the author of this Doctor of Ministry project to develop a resource material to help train teachers for a more effective teaching ministry, as an attempt to address a serious problem that is long over-due in the Chinese American churches.

Thesis

Effectiveness in Bible teaching in the Chinese American Church can be increased by training teachers to interpret the biblical text according to its literary genre; apply the biblical message to the lives of the Chinese American learners in light of the goal of Christian education; and teach the Bible lesson that aims at life changes.

Working Definitions of Major Terms

Literary Genre: A grouping of similar literary works that function in larger units such as the Narrative, the Wisdom, the Prophetic, etc. and in smaller units or sub-genres such as the Didactic narrative, Dramatic narrative and Historical narrative of the Narrative; the Proverb, Proverbial Saying, and Royal Testament of the Wisdom; and the Judgment Speech, Salvation Speech and Woe Oracle of the Prophetic.

The Goal of Christian education: the kind of person Christ intends the learner turns out to be at the end of the educative process, which is related to God's intended purpose for humankind in creation and in regeneration.

Work Previously Done in the Field

As Donald Miller suggests, since both scholarly exegesis and religious education have to do with the discovery of meaning (hermeneutic), the two disciplines ought to inform one another.[*] Unfortunately, a survey of the literature reveals that apart from Bible teaching

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[*] Donald E. Miller, Story and Context: An Introduction to Christian Education (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 107.

curriculum, few scholars have attempted to integrate biblical studies with religious education. Among the works that have made such an effort are Walter Brueggemann's The Creative Word: Canon as a Model for Biblical Education, and Charles Meichert's Wise Teaching: Biblical Wisdom and Educational Ministry. The former deals with the nature of three different types of Old Testament texts: the Law, the Prophets and the Wisdom literature, and how they are to be understood and applied as different means of revelation (education) from God. The latter deals with the nature of Wisdom's approach to education, and how it can be applied to educational ministries of the church today. It seems apparent that both works point to the need for interpreting biblical texts according to their literary genres. Besides Brueggemann and Meichert, Leland Ryken and James Wilhoit in their work "Teaching the Bible: the Church's Unfinished Task" in the Christian Education Journal specifically point out the importance of interpreting and teaching the biblical message from the perspective of its literary genre. Bible teaching curriculum probably represents the best effort made to integrate biblical studies with religious education. However, a great majority of these materials are written for teaching children and youth, and they are designed to address the needs of the dominant culture, which is that of the white, middle-class Americans. Only in recent years have multicultural curriculum materials begun to appear, first for African Americans, and more recently for Latin Americans. While efforts to integrate biblical studies and adult religious education with particular focus on Asian Americans are indeed limited, a lot of works have been done in related fields. The following are major resources particularly helpful for this project.

1. Biblical Studies (focusing on the literary analysis of the three genres: narratives, wisdom literature and prophetic books). Robert Alter's The Art of Biblical Narrative lays down distinctive guidelines for interpreting the narrative art, which is essential for a literary analysis of the genre. Richard Pratt's He Gave Us Stories provides step-by-step guidelines to literary analysis, including how to get at the theme of the story. The book is especially helpful for training lay persons, for it gives good instruction without getting too technical. And J. P. Fokkelman's Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel provides literary analyses important for an

understanding of the sample passage. Anthony Ceresko's Introduction to Old Testament Wisdom provides the historical context and literary analysis of wisdom literature. Charles Melchert's Wise Teaching gives a comprehensive review of the biblical wisdom literature in the light of its fusion of literary and poetic interests with theological, ethical and educational issues. Both books deal with major texts in the classical wisdom corpus: Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes. And C. L. Seow's Ecclesiastes of the Anchor Bible Commentary Series provides detailed discussions on the contexts, structure and content of the book of Ecclesiastes as well as on its individual texts, which is especially helpful for analyzing the sample passage. For the study of prophetic books, Marvin Sweeney's Isaiah 1-39 of Forms of the Old Testament Literature identifies the genres and sub-genres in Isaiah 1-39, which can be applied to those found in other prophetic books as well. The discussion on historical and literary contexts of Isaiah 5 contributes to an understanding of the sample passage. Claus Westermann's classic work Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech gives clues to identifying the standard prophetic judgment-speech forms. And Joseph Blenkinsopp's Isaiah 1-39 of the Anchor Bible Commentary, R. E. Clements' Isaiah 1-39 and Christopher Seitz' Isaiah 1-39 of the Interpretation Series provide helpful discussions on interpreting the sample passage and its literary and historical contexts.

2. Religious Education. Susanne Johnson's essay "Education in the Image of God" in Theological Approaches to Christian Education lays the foundation for the goal of Christian education, which is spiritual growth toward conforming to the image of Christ in life and in mission. This goal provides the standard by which the effectiveness of teaching is evaluated, as well as the clues to identifying spiritual problems of the learners. Kent Johnson and Nelson Strobert's essay "Principles of Adult Learning" in Lifelong Learning discusses and evaluates theories of adult learning and motivation, which is important for training teachers to teach adults. LeRoy Ford's Design for Teaching and Training provides guidelines for designing cognitive and affective learning activities. Especially significant is the affective aspect, which has been greatly neglected in most teachings in the Chinese American churches. Richard Osmer's Teaching for Faith provides thorough guidelines on the use of various teaching methods such as lecture,

discussion, life story and reflection, etc., giving suggestions not only for the actual teaching session, but for lesson preparation as well. It is therefore very practical for training purposes.

Addressing specific needs and issues of Chinese Americans are resources from Asian American studies. Ken Uyeda Fong's Pursuing the Pearl and Fenggang Yang's Chinese Christians in America provide valuable information on the immigration pattern in recent decades, the Chinese American experience in the larger American society, and the problems and issues in the Chinese American churches. In People on the Way, an essay by Grace Kim, "Asian North American Immigrant Parents and Youth: Parenting and Growing Up in a Cultural Gap," deals with intergenerational conflicts common to most immigrant families. Robert Lee's Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture and Ronald Takaki's Strangers from a Different Shore tell of the "Model Minority Myth" that boasts the academic and economic successes of Asian Americans on the one hand, but serves as a cover-up for racial discrimination on the other. Although many Chinese Americans may be aware of some of these problems, they may not have looked at these issues critically in the light of Scripture. By incorporating such studies into this training resource, hopefully the teachers will be sensitized to the needs of their students, and be motivated to apply the Bible lessons to their lives accordingly.

<div align="center">Scope and Limitations</div>

This Doctor of Ministry project intends to increase the effectiveness of Bible teaching in the Chinese American Church by providing a resource material to train teachers to interpret the biblical text according to its literary genre, to apply its message to address the needs and issues relevant to Chinese Americans in light of the goal of Christian education, and to employ a variety of teaching methods based on established theories of learning and principles of teaching. It is hoped that by so equipping teachers for a more effective Bible teaching ministry, the Chinese American congregations may be nurtured toward reaching the goal of Christian education, i.e. persons may engage in a continuous process of conforming to the image of Christ in life and in mission. The scope of this project includes literary analyses of the Narrative, the Wisdom and the Prophetic in the field of biblical studies, and discussions on the goal of Christian education, Asian

American studies, concepts of learning and teaching methods in the field of religious education. While this study suggests other areas to be explored, such as other literary genres of both Testaments in biblical studies, and Bible curriculum development in religious education, the present focus does not permit further coverage; hence, they will be left to future work.

Procedure for Integration

The main body of this project consists of three chapters: Chapter 2 deals with biblical studies and Chapters 3 and 4 with religious education. They are arranged in the same sequence as the process of integration. A three-step process in developing three sample lessons will demonstrate such integration of the two disciplines. The sample texts are 2 Samuel 18:1-19:8 for Narrative, Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:26 for Wisdom literature and Isaiah 5 for Prophetic literature. The first step, covered in Chapter 2, is to interpret these texts by literary genre analysis, as a result of which their theological themes messages will be identified. The second step, discussed in Chapter 3, is to apply these main themes to relevant areas of concern to the lives of the Chinese Americans. For example, the conflict between David and Absalom in 2 Samuel will be taken to address the problem of the consequences of unresolved family conflict. Questions raised by Qoheleth for living a good life in Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:26 will be used to challenge learners to reflect on their own pursuits in life. The prophetic message of Isaiah 5 will be applied to the concern for social justice in the midst of material affluence and complacency. The last step, covered in Chapter 4, deals with effective teaching of these biblical messages. Apart from examining learning theories and teaching methods, the design of the learning process will also take into consideration the literary genres of the biblical texts. For example, dramatic reading and sharing of life stories of family conflicts help learners identify with David's emotions in the narratives. Wisdom literature lends itself to open-ended discussion, paradox teaching, and self-reflection. Debate, reflection and action may follow the prophetic call for social justice.

The research tool used for this project is primarily that of literature research. A survey on the adult Sunday School ministry of Chinese American churches has also been conducted to substantiate the author's observations on the needs and issues of this ministry, the results of

which have been tabulated in the Appendix A.

Chapter Outlines

The main body from Chapters 2 to 4 addresses the problem of ineffective Bible teaching in evangelical Chinese American churches by training teachers in three areas. First, Chapter 2 aims at training them to interpret biblical texts according to their respective literary genres. For each genre, its literary characteristics will be examined and its literary and historical contexts will be explored, so that its theological theme and message may be identified. Second, Chapter 3 deals with helping teachers to apply the biblical message to the lives of the Chinese American learners. The goal of Christian education will first be explored, in the light of which the experiences of the learners will be evaluated and their spiritual needs and issues identified, so that the biblical message may be communicated to address these needs and issues. Third, Chapter 4 is concerned with equipping teachers to teach the Bible lessons effectively. Its content covers educational theories of learning, adult learning theories, teaching methods and the teaching/learning process, culminating in the presentation of lesson plans for the three sample passages. The final Chapter summarizes key issues discussed in Chapters 1 to 4, and evaluates the degree to which the project has defended the working thesis. Areas of need for further research and development will also be identified.

Suggestion for Use

Intended to be used as a resource for Christian educators and pastors interested in training Bible teachers, worksheets are provided in Appendix B for use in teacher-training workshops. Typically, for the study of literary characteristics in Chapter 2, provision is made on the worksheets for learners to take brief notes as the trainer explains the characteristics, to be followed by practice exercises to make sure they understand them. For example, as the trainer explains the various types of scenes from pages 14-15 of this resource, the learners may follow along and write under Workshop Notes of *Worksheet #1* all Israel fled, each to his tent (18:17) as an example of "fast motion," and the battle spread over the countryside (18:8) as an example of "panoramic view," etc. Immediately following the trainer's presentation on "scenes" on page 15,

(B-Worksheet #1a) signals for him/her to stop and allow learners to do an exercise on finding the same types of "scenes" from another passage (2 Sam 18:19-32). For example, a "fast motion" scene may be found in 18:23, which describes Ahimaaz running past the Cushite, and a "panoramic view" may be found in 18:24, which describes the watchman seeing from the roof top the two runners coming in from a distance, etc. For the study of literary and historical contexts in Chapter 2, most of the exercises on the worksheets are given as guided discussions, e.g. *#1k and 1l*, with their respective explanations given immediately following *(B-Worksheet #1k)* and *(B-Worksheet #1l)* in this resource. When the coverage is too broad or when the information is not available to learners in a workshop situation to allow for meaningful discussion, the material from this resource is to be presented by the trainer, and learners may take notes on the worksheets accordingly, e.g. literary and historical contexts on *Worksheet #3*. For Chapters 3 and 4, while the material may be new for most learners, additional insights or demonstrations are solicited from them due to contributions they can make from their own experiences. For example, learners are expected to share their responses for *Worksheet #4a, b and c* after the trainer has presented materials on pages 88-89, 89-91 and 91-93 respectively.

Usually, exercises are taken from the sample passage or from its larger contexts as much as possible, so that learners can take an active part in discovering literary characteristics and in interpreting the meaning of the sample passage in the process. Although the discussion in this resource provides clues to these exercises, answers are not limited to it, e.g. discussion related to exercise *#1d* is found on pages 19-20, immediately following the signal *(B-Worksheet #1d)*, but learners may discover additional examples of irony, suspense and hyperbole from 2 Samuel 18:19-19:8. When answers are obvious or open-ended, explanations may not be provided in this resource, e.g. *#1a*. After learners have finished working on the exercises, the trainer must use his/her own discretion to allow for discussion, sharing, or summary of their responses as needed.

CHAPTER 2

Interpreting the Biblical Texts

Introduction

The first step in increasing Bible teachers' effectiveness begins with training them the basic skills in biblical interpretation. Since biblical texts appear in many literary genres, an understanding of their various literary characteristics governs the way they should be read, e.g., narratives should be read as narratives, psalms as psalms, etc.[1] But as noted by Ryken and Wilhoit, one of the weaknesses of Bible teachers lies in their lack of proficiency to study a biblical passage in terms of its literary genre.[2] For the Chinese American teachers who are trained in the Inductive Bible study method, their approach to the study of the biblical text is by making observations on factual data, such as Who (are the persons involved); What (is happening); When (does it happen); Why (does it happen); etc. While these observations may be helpful for analyzing narratives, they are less so for studying prophetic literature, and probably even irrelevant for dealing with wisdom literature. Even with the study of narratives, such data are inadequate as clues for interpretation.

As will be demonstrated in this Chapter, the literary genre approach to Bible study not only provide clues to interpretation, it helps to break down big blocks of material into smaller literary units of manageable size for a close reading or analysis of the biblical text. In addition, the identification of literary features provides links to its larger contexts for contextual study, which is crucial for the discovery of its theme and message. In this Chapter, three of the major Old Testament literary genres are considered: Narrative, Wisdom and Prophetic, each in terms of its literary characteristics, literary and historical contexts and theological theme and message.

Narrative

A large portion of the Old Testament is communicated to its readers through narratives. Narratives, or stories, have their own convention of expressions that vary from culture to culture.

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[1] Leland Ryken and James Wilhoit, "Teaching the Bible: The Church's Unfinished Task," *Christian Education Journal* 10 (Winter 1990): 41–43.

[2] Ibid., 41.

Knowing such convention gives clues to their interpretation. For example, fairy tales of the Western culture often begin with "Once upon a time..." and end with "...and they lived happily ever after." Readers who are familiar with the convention would not take the beginning line historically, or the ending line literally. Similarly, ancient Israelite culture has its own literary convention, the interpretation of which is affected by its particular type of narrative material: whether it is didactic, historical or dramatic. Their purposes are respectively, to teach a moral or theological lesson, to record historical events, and to entertain.

While the sample passage selected for this study, 2 Samuel 18:1-19:8[3] in its context of the Succession Narrative, is found in the historical book division of the Bible, it is more appropriately classified as didactic rather than historical narrative, as evident both from its lack of precision to historical details and from its didactic elements. An example of the former may be found in the author's record of Absalom's statement that he has no sons (2 Sam 18:18) just a few chapters after the allusion to his having three sons and one daughter (2 Sam 14:27), without even trying to explain the discrepancy. An example of the latter may be seen in the principle of retribution applied to David, for his murder of Uriah results in the sword not departing from his house as pronounced by the prophet Nathan (12:9-10), and come true in the murder of his sons Amnon and Absalom.

Generally speaking, biblical narratives are hardly just historical in nature and purpose. As Grant Osborne points out, in the biblical narrative, both history and theology are brought together via a "story" format, such that while the historical basis is crucial, the task of the interpreter is to decipher the meaning of the historical-theological text, not to reconstruct the original event.[4]

Literary Characteristics

Sternberg calls the biblical narrative "a functional structure, a means to a communicative end, a transaction between the narrator and the audience on whom he wishes to produce a certain

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[3] Scripture passages in this study are from the New American Standard Version, unless otherwise noted. Those modified for inclusive language are marked with an asterisk (*) next to the reference. e.g. Prov 2:4*.

[4] Grant R. Osborne, The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 153-54.

effect by way of certain strategies."⁵ Based on these communicative strategies, literary critics are able to develop techniques that allow for a "close reading" of the text, noting its literary characteristics such as dialogue, character, tension, plot, etc., so that its meaning can be deciphered, and its intended effect reproduced.⁶ The features discussed below are: scenes, narration, repetition, irony, suspense, hyperbole, structure, characterization and plot.

Scenes. They are the basic building blocks of biblical narratives. Pratt defines "scenes" as "batches of closely related circumstances, characters, and actions," and they are separated from one another by significant changes in time, setting, and mode of narration.⁷ These scenes can be manipulated for dramatic effects.⁸ They may slow down to direct speech, or to descriptive motion such as in the crucial scene of Absalom's entrapment on the tree: "...And his head was caught fast in the oak, so he was left hanging between heaven and earth..." (18:9). They may speed up to cover a long time in a few words, such as "And all Israel fled, each to his tent" (18:17d). Dramatic effect may also be created by spatial variations, i.e. shifting back and forth from panoramic to close up views. An example of the panoramic view may be found in the description: "For the battle there was spread over the whole countryside..."(18:8). A close-up view may be found in "And the king covered his face and cried out with a loud voice..." and in direct speeches (19:4). Generally speaking, attention must be placed on slow motions and close up views; however, shifts to scenes of sweeping statements and panoramic views must also be noted.

Alter places special emphasis on type-scenes, which are fixed situations according to a set order of motifs.⁹ Some of the most common type-scenes in biblical narratives he identifies are the annunciation of the birth of a hero to his barren mother, such as the cases of Sarah and Rebecca; the encounter with the future betrothed at a well, such as the cases of Moses and Jacob;

⁵ Meir Sternberg, The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 1.
⁶ Osborne, 154.
⁷ Richard L. Pratt Jr., He Gave Us Stories: The Bible Student's Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Narratives (Brentwood, Tenn.: Wolgemuth & Hyatt Publishers, 1990), 151.
⁸ Ibid., 166ff.
⁹ Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 50.

the testament of a dying hero, such as the cases of Isaac and Jacob; etc.[10] Type-scenes should be noted not only for the convention they share in common, but also for what is unique in each application that gives it "a sudden tilt of innovation," which Alter sees as an instrument of characterization and foreshowing.[11] And the total suppression of a convention may be a deliberate ploy of characterization and thematic argument.[12]

In this sample passage, king David's response to the news of Absalom's death may be compared to his responses to those of his other sons: the first baby by Bathsheba (2 Sam 12:15-23) and the crown prince Amnon (2 Sam 13:30-39). While he wept, fasted and spent nights lying on the ground when the former was alive but sick, he engaged in a series of activities at the news of the baby's death: got up, washed, put on lotions, changed clothes, went into the house of the Lord, worshiped, went to his own house and requested that food be served. But no more emotional grief was expressed. The narrator even allows him a direct discourse explaining to his servants that since his child could not return to him, there was no point for him to fast and plead for the Lord's mercy, so he might as well resume his normal life and activities. At the news of the murder of Amnon, the narrator portrays him as tearing his clothes, lying on the ground and weeping bitterly (2 Sam 13:31, 36), but no direct discourse was used to express his grief. In both cases then, his type-response was reasonably under control. In the sample passage, however, despite Absalom's intention of grasping his throne, David's reactions to the death news were given exceptional emphases. His tremendous anxiety while awaiting the outcome of the battle was highlighted through his direct discourses with the watchman and with each of the two runners, and his emotional outburst upon receiving the death news was vividly expressed by his repeated cry of his son Absalom, and his spoken wish that he would die in his place. Such deviation from the type-scene reflects his exceptional emotional grief over the death of Absalom, perhaps indicative of his more intimate feelings toward him. *(B-Worksheet #1a)*

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[10] Ibid. 51.
[11] Ibid. 52, 56.
[12] Ibid. 61.

Narration.   Four modes of narration are identified by Pratt,[13] and applied to the
sample passage as follows. First, "authorial comment" is an evaluation or explanation of
something made by the author, e.g. "Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for
himself a pillar which is in the King's Valley...and it is called Absalom's Monument to this day"
(18:18). Second, "description" is an added piece of information that stops the flow of the story
line in order to highlight something in the narrative, e.g. "For the battle there was spread over the
whole countryside, and the forest devoured more people that day than the sword devoured"
(18:8). Third, "straight narration" is an account of actions that are taking place in the story, e.g.
"And David sent the people out, one third under the command of Joab..." (18:2). Fourth,
"dramatic depiction" or "direct discourse" is a direct speech by which characters are allowed to
speak and think for themselves, e.g. "Whatever seems best to you I will do" (18:4).

Of the four modes of narration, the direct discourse is the most common in biblical
narratives, and they are often used for the sake of emphasis. As Alter states: "as a rule, when a
narrative event seems important, the writer will render it mainly through dialogue."[14] Sometimes,
even in third-person narrations, elements of preceding dialogues are often quoted, drawing
attention back to the original speaker.[15] For example, when the soldier explained why he did not
kill Absalom, he cited David's command directly, "for in our hearing the king charged you...
saying, 'Protect for me the young man Absalom'" (18:12), instead of giving a third-person
account of the command. Very often, even thoughts are rendered as actual speech, usually
expressed by a person saying something "to his heart."[16] When a scene is conceived visually, the
author may report it through speech, such as the scene of David at the gate awaiting news of the
outcome of the battle, was conveyed in a dialogue between him and the watchman (18:24-27).[17]

The most distinctive feature of the role played by the narrator is perhaps "the way

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[13] Pratt. 156.
[14] Alter. 182.
[15] Ibid. 65.
[16] Ibid. 68.
[17] Ibid. 70.

omniscience and unobtrusiveness are combined."[18] He is all knowing and perfectly reliable, with a total coherent knowledge available only to God, but he is also purposely selective, intermittent and partial in explaining what he reports, so that much about character, motive and moral status remains ambiguous.[19] Therefore, readers of these narratives must wonder about motivations and ask questions, such as why the narration is interrupted to insert a piece of expository information, e.g. the quotation of Absalom's words while he was alive that he had no son to carry on his name (18:18); or why the narrator does not explain its contradiction with another authorial comment just a few chapters earlier, which states that he had three sons (14:27). *(B-Worksheet #1b)*

Repetitions. In Hebrew narratives, instructions, predictions and actions are often repeated word for word as they are obeyed, fulfilled or reported to another party respectively.[20] Such practice is found throughout the sample passage, apparently for the sake of emphasis.

In the first half of the story (18:1-18), the king's command to deal with Absalom gently (18:5), given in the hearing of all the people, was repeated to Joab in another direct discourse by the soldier who first found him (18:12). This underscores the fact that Absalom was killed in opposition to the king's command. The narration about Absalom's head being caught by "the oak" tree was repeated in the same soldier's report to Joab (18:9-10), who shot Absalom while the latter was still alive in the midst of "the oak" tree (18:14), as the narrator again reports it. Thus making it obvious that he could have been captured alive.

In the second half of the story beginning with 18:19, repetitions are found even more frequently. Key words such as "run," "news" or "good news" and "Absalom, my son" are repeated to reveal the theme of David's response to the news of his son's death. Ahimaaz' request to deliver the news to David was repeated after being turned down by Joab initially (18:19 & 22). This repeated request reveals Ahimaaz' eagerness to bear what was to him good news of victory for the king, and Joab's anxiety over the king's reaction over the bad news of his son's death. In

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[18] Ibid. 183.
[19] Ibid. 184.
[20] Ibid. 88.

Joab's rebuke of the king's lack of response toward his troops, the listing of the various royal household members with the repetition of "lives" in 19:5 reinforces the contribution David's servants made in risking their own lives to save theirs, and magnifies the charge against David for taking them for granted. *(B-Worksheet #1c)*

But by far, the king's mourning is given the most attention, as a variety of repetitions are described four times as noted by Fokkelman.[21] First, when the death of Absalom was implied in the Cushite's answer, it was described in a series of verbs: he was deeply moved, he went up, and wept, he said as he walked, and a direct quotation of his cry (18:33). Second, it was told to Joab in a direct discourse that he was weeping as he mourned for Absalom (19:1). Third, the people heard it said of the king, also given in direct discourse, that he was grieved for his son (19:2). Fourth, it was related that the king covered his face and cried out with a loud voice, directly quoting his utterance (19:4). Since direct discourse is found in all four instances, the fact and the expression of his mourning are therefore highlighted. Moreover, repetition is found in the content of the king's utterances: the name "Absalom" five times and "my son" eight times, instead of his reference to "the young man Absalom" before his death, thus highlighting the more personal and intimate relationship he now expressed toward Absalom.

<u>Other Story-telling Techniques</u>. In addition to the above, other techniques commonly employed in Hebrew narratives include irony, suspense and hyperbole. Examples of all three can also be found in the sample passage.

In the first half of the story, an irony is found in the fact that Absolom's head, a symbol of his beauty and pride, was caught by the oak tree, leaving him defenselessly hanging between heaven and earth (18:9). The monument that Absalom had set up to perpetuate his fame as a powerful king was now to commemorate him as an accursed fratricide and rebel,[22] for his corpse being covered by a heap of stone was reminiscent of the stoning to death of a rebellious son (Deut

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[21] J. P. Fokkelman. *Narrative Art and Poetry in the Books of Samuel*, vol. 1. *King David (2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings 1-2)* (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1981), 267.

[22] P. Kyle McCarter Jr., *II Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*, Anchor Bible Commentary, vol. 9 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), 407.

21:18-21). In narrating events leading to the death of Absalom, suspense mounts as 18:9b depicts him in his utter helplessness, not knowing how his fate would turn out; and the soldier's double protest in Verses 12-13 delayed Joab's action, until suspense was brought to an end in Joab's rapid killing of Absalom in 18:14-15.[23] A number of hyperbolas can also be observed. The first one was cited by the soldiers that even if half of them were to die, the opposing army would not care, thus magnifying the worth of the king's life in comparison to theirs, so as to prevent him from going into battle (18:3). To stress the devastating effect and casualty of the battle and to prepare the readers or audience for the fate of Absalom, the forest was said to have devoured more people than the sword did (18:8). The soldier's reply to Joab that even if he were given a thousand pieces of silver he would not have killed the king's son was a hyperbole of his loyalty and obedience to the king (18:12). *(B-Worksheet #1d)*

In the second half, the narrator makes even more frequent use of the techniques of irony, suspense and hyperbole. In terms of irony, the king hoped against hope to hear good news from the two runners, the news turned out to be good for everyone except for himself.[24] The word of greeting to the king, "shalom" (18:28) was contrary to the way the king received the news.[25] The authorial description about the victory turning into mourning for the army that won, and the people stealing into the city as those humiliated and fled from battle (19:3) are also ironical. Joab's harsh rebuke of the king's emotional response over the death of his son reflects his perception of the king's behavior as totally ironic: loving those who hated him and hating those who loved him (19:6). Finally, the king who gave commands to his army at the beginning of the episode was silenced, threatened, and forced to put on a performance by his subordinate at the end of it (19:5-8)! In narrating the events leading to David's receiving the news of Absalom's death, the narrator arouses an emotional tension by a triple retardation, as noted by Conroy.[26] First, Ahimaaz' offer to bring news to the king was suspended three times: Joab discouraged him

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[23] Ibid., 46.
[24] Sternberg, 405.
[25] Charles M. S. C. Conroy. Absalom, Absalom! Narrative and Language in 2 Samuel 13-20 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), 52.
[26] Ibid., 47.

from running; then dispatched another runner in his place; finally allowed him to run only after Ahimaaz' repeated pleading (18:19-23). Second, suspense over the arrival and identification of the runners (18:24-27) was created by the conversation between David and the watchman who reported what he saw from the roof,[27] then by his identifying the runner by the style of his running. Third, suspense in reporting the news was made first by the king's expression of hope during the approach of the runners; then by his direct question about Absalom's fate; and finally by Ahimaaz giving an evasive answer so the question must be repeated to Cushite, until the suspense came to an end when the king broke into lament (18:28-33). Finally, Joab's speech in rebuking the king consists of many hyperbolas underscoring the absurdity and contradiction of the king's behavior: reversing the love/hate relationship, having no regard for his servants, and wishing the life of Absalom in exchange for all the lives of his servants (19:6). The king was threatened with total desertion if he would not comfort his subordinates right away (19:7). All these hyperbolas serve to show the loyalty of the army toward the king, the king's abusive use of royal privileges, and to justify the people's utter disappointment in him at the end (2 Sam 20:1 & 1 Kgs 12:16).

Structure. The sample passage concerning the death of Absalom is syntactically tied to and preceded by a transitional section (17:24-29) that focuses on the arrival and preparation of the two armies for battle, and it is followed by a section concerning the restoration of King David to his throne. The transitional section is described in straight narration while the sample passage is dominated by direct discourse, and the following section reflects a major shift in theme, from events surrounding Absalom's death to David's return to Jerusalem.

A story may contain many episodes, "the simplest units of narrative material displaying a significant level of independence from their contexts."[28] For example, the story of Absalom contains a number of episodes that may be entitled "Absalom's Revenge" (13:23-39); "Absalom's Return" (2 Sam 14); "Absalom's Revolt" (2 Sam 15:1-12); "Absalom's Advisers" (2

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[27] Jacob Licht. Storytelling in the Bible (Jerusalem: Magnes Press. Hebrew University. 1978), 45.
[28] Pratt, 180.

Sam 16:15-17:23), etc. Within the sample passage, two main episodes can be identified: the death of Absalom (18:1-17) and the king father's reaction to his son's death (18:19-19:9). They are tied together not only by an authorial comment on Absalom's memorial in between (18:18), but also by a description concerning the outcome of the battle in the middle (C), and a similar note that "Israel fled, each to his tent" at the end (A'). The modes of narration in biblical narratives usually shift from narration to dialogue, and then alternate between the two, but always centering on the sharply salient verbal intercourse of the characters, who act upon one another and expose their relation to God.[29] Upon close examination of the shifts in time, setting and the mode of narration, the structure of the sample passage may be outlined as below:

Episode 1: The Death of Prince Absalom (18:1-17)

18:1-2a	Sending out of the king's army (Narration)	A
18:2b-6a	The king father's intention (Discourse)	B
18:6b-9a	Outcome of the battle (Description)	C
18:9b-17c	The prince's death (Discourse)	B'
18:17d	Fleeing of Israel (Narration)	A'
18:18	Interlude: Absalom's Memorial (Authorial Comment) *(B-Worksheet#1e)*

Episode 2: The Reactions of King David (18:19-19:8)

18:19-23	Bringing news to the king (Discourse)	A
18:24-19:1	Response of the king father (Discourse)	B
19:2-3	Outcome of the victory (Description)	C
19:4-8c	Rebuke of the king father (Discourse)	B'
19:8d	Fleeing of Israel (Narration)	A'

As evident from the above divisions by major changes in modes of narration or setting (B of Episode 2), which find support in Hebrew syntax, both episodes are chiastically arranged. The whole story is framed by straight narration of the battle (A of episode 1 and A' of both episodes),

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[29] Alter, 75.

with a description of the outcome of the battle—defeat for the prince's army (episode 1); and victory for the king father's army (episode 2) in the middle (C). The rest of the narrative, which constitutes a large portion of the sample passage, is conveyed in direct discourses with connecting straight narrations in both episodes (A of episode 2; B and B' of both episodes). Although the story is framed by the battle between the two armies, the common emphasis placed on the direct discourse in biblical narratives suggests that the events surrounding the death of Absalom and his king father's response are its main focus.

Plot. An episode or story often begins with a problem, ends with a resolution, and it traces the developments in between.[30] The arrangement of scenes, often in a chiastic (ABCC'B'A' or ABCBA) pattern, to heighten and lessen tension from the beginning to the end is described as the plot or dramatic flow.[31]

For the sample passage, the first episode begins with the expressed intention of the king father over the treatment of his son in battle, as he urged his commanders-in-chief to deal with the young man gently. The problem or the tension created is then: Will the soldiers obey the king's command in dealing with the rebellious young man Absalom on the battlefield, that is, to spare his life or capture him alive? Tension rises as the narrator describes how his head was caught by a tree and he was left hanging between the heavens and the earth. Although the soldier who first found him explained to Joab he would not kill him because of the king's command, tension continues to rise, as Joab remained unconvinced. The problem is resolved and tension released abruptly when Joab shot three spears at his heart, and tension falls as the ten young men proceeded to have him killed and buried at the end of the episode. *(B-Worksheet#1f)*

The second episode begins with Ahimaaz asking for permission to carry the victory news to the king, but Joab's reluctance in sending him hints at a possible violent response from the king. The question is then: How will David respond upon hearing the news of his son's death? Tension rises as the two runners drew near to the king, and as the latter kept anticipating good

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[30] Pratt, 186.
[31] Ibid., 179.

news from them! Tension continues to build up when Ahimaaz arrived but avoided telling the bad news, until the climax is reached when the second runner arrived and was asked about the well being of Absalom. Again, the problem is resolved and tension released abruptly when David broke into tears and cried out with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom!" Although the narrative continues with Joab's rebuke of the king, but tension has fallen as the latter remains silent until the end of the episode.

Characterization. A roster of Old Testament characters includes God, supernatural creatures, human beings, and sometimes, even animals, although the primary focus is usually on human beings. Clues for characterization may be found in the descriptions of a person's appearance and social status, his/her overt actions, direct discourses and thoughts, interaction with and reactions from God and other human characters, and descriptive comments from the narrator.[32] But as Pratt rightly points out, biblical writers did not intend simply to describe human affairs, but to reveal God and His will to His people.[33] Therefore, God was never absent from the outlooks of these writers: He may play a central role in some texts, a less prominent role in others, or He may even fade into the background, yet He was always presupposed as the providential controller of events, an implicit character in every story.[34] In the sample passage, while the drama primarily concerns human characters, namely David, Joab and Absalom, God is presupposed as the controller of events, as the narrator has already pointed out in the previous chapter: "For the Lord had ordained to thwart the good counsel of Ahithophel in order that the Lord might bring calamity on Absalom" (2 Sam 17:14).

In every story, the main character or the protagonist is usually the one who is given the most exposure in description and direct speech, and the antagonist is the major character who is arrayed against the protagonist.[35] The tension between the two, along with their respective supporting characters, reveals the central plot of the story.[36] In the sample passage, the

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[32] Ibid., 137-40.
[33] Ibid., 13.
[34] Ibid., 131.
[35] Ibid., 143-44.
[36] Ibid., 147.

protagonist is obviously David, whose name or title "the king" appears most frequently at a total of thirty-three times, and whose attitude and emotions toward his son are vividly portrayed through expressed words and actions, as well as reactions from others. The antagonist is Joab, one of David's commanders of his troops, who deliberately chose to disobey the king's command to spare Absalom's life in episode one, and opposed the king to his face in episode two. The contrast between David's and Joab's attitudes toward Absalom, and that between the king's and the troops' attitudes toward each other bring out the impact of the royal family conflict and its kingdom consequences.

In a given narrative event, especially at the beginning of a new story, initial words spoken by a person are revelatory in the exposition of his/her character.[37] In the sample passage, king David's initial dialogue with his troops before they were sent out to battle is revelatory of his attitude in handling conflicts with his son Absalom, and of the army's loyalty toward him. For while the king said with determination in the beginning, "I myself will surely go out with you also," he was readily persuaded by his troops to stay behind on the basis of a much higher value placed on his life as king over against those of their own. So he yielded to their proposal and said, "Whatever seems good in your eyes, I will do" (18:2b-4b). Such a last minute dialogue between the king and his army seems to expose David's reluctance in direct confrontation with his son, and was therefore glad to be excused from the possibility of engaging him face to face in battle. However, the next statement he made to his three commanders in the presence of all his troops, "Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom," (18:4b-5) reflects his intention of having his son captured alive. In a way, he was entrusting them with the responsibility of disciplining Absalom!

David's emotion of hope and fear over the well being of Absalom may be seen in his nervous waiting for good news from the reporters. There were very good reasons for him to hope for the safe return of his son. Had he not told his commanders in the hearing of the whole army to

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[37] Alter, 74.

deal gently with Absalom for his sake? After all, did they not express their loyalty to him and urge him to stay behind rather than risk his life in battle? Therefore, as Wharton notes, "At each report David frantically rationalizes the news to extort some glimmer of hope... Nine times in 18:19-31 the word 'news' or 'good news' reverberates... until... David perceives that the worst conceivable 'news' has become for him an unalterable fact."[38] Then the sense of hope finally gave way to grief and despair, as the narrator describes him as "deeply moved," a term that depicts his inner emotion, as indicative of genuine grief.[39] And such inward emotion was expressed outwardly by his mournful actions and cries of despair: "(he) went up to... and wept... he said as he walked, 'O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom!'" (18:33) and "the king covered his face and cried out with a loud voice, 'O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!'" (19:4). As Brueggemann insightfully points out: the change of designation from "the young man" previously to "my son" reveals the father's deep emotion of grief and affection for his rebellious son, which he could no longer hide, now that he was dead.[40]

Soon after he had started the grieving process over the loss of his son, Joab pitilessly and powerfully rebuked him that "the soldiers had not risked their lives so that he might wail."[41] He was brought to the awareness that he had better play the game that was forced upon him: get out of his pit, sit at the gate and review the troops in celebration of the victory. In contrast to Joab's violent rhetoric, the stark silence of David reflects the heaviness of his heart.[42] In biblical narratives, when a character has refrained from speech while some utterance is expected is also revelatory of his/her disposition on the matter.[43] Here, David's silence at the end of Joab's

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[38] James A. Wharton. "A Plausible Tale: Story and Theology in II Samuel 9-20, 1 Kings 1-2," Interpretation (Oct. 1981): 344.

[39] David M. Gunn. The Story of King David: Genre and Interpretation. JSOT Supp. Series. 6 (Sheffield: University of Sheffield. 1978). 103. Also Leo G. Perdue. "Is There Anyone Left of the House of Saul...?" Ambiguity and the Characterization of David in the Succession Narrative." Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 30 (1984): 78.

[40] Walter Brueggemann. First and Second Samuel. ed. James Luther Mays and Patrick D. Miller Jr. Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press. 1990). 323.

[41] M. A. Beek. "David and Absalom: A Hebrew Tragedy in Prose." in Voices from Amsterdam: A Modern Tradition of Reading Biblical Narrative. trans. and ed. Martin Kessler (Atlanta: Scholars Press. 1994). 166.

[42] Conroy. 80.

[43] Alter. 79.

lengthy and angry rebuke seems to reveal, to borrow from Alter's expression in describing his similar silence over Amnon's rape of Tamar, his "domestic and political impotence."[44] (B-Worksheet #1g)

In this sample passage, the antagonist Joab is portrayed positively with respect to the State, David's throne and the people, but negatively with respect to the king's attitude and emotions toward Absalom, who threatened the security of the State. Joab's loyalty toward David and his throne was evident from earlier facts that he conspired with him in the murder of Uriah, and that he initiated the reconciliation between him and his son (14:28-33). Obviously, his change of policy toward the crown prince took place only after the latter decided to take the throne. His killing of Absalom was deliberately and deceitfully against the king's command, which was given in the hearing of the whole army, and reiterated by the soldier who first found Absalom (18:12). The fact that Absalom was found alive hanging on a tree makes it clear that he could have been captured alive, and it excluded the possibility for Joab to excuse himself on the ground of self-defense.[45] The soldier, a man of principle and integrity, acted as "a secret representative of the narrator's moral position," as Fokkelman puts it, for he regarded the killing of Absalom a "deceit" to himself and his lord (18:13).[46] Therefore, in contrast to the soldier, Joab, who tried, though unsuccessfully, to get someone to do his dirty work for ten pieces of silver, and eventually had Absalom killed by ten of his soldier, could well qualify for the moral definition of "deceit."[47]

While Joab's actions toward David and Absalom are portrayed as insubordinate and deceitful, his genuine concern for the people and the State is cast beyond doubt. As soon as Absalom was killed, he avoided unnecessary bloodshed by restraining his troops from pursuing after Israel. His refusal of Ahimaaz' initial request to bring news to the king reflects his intention to protect the young man from David's possible violent reaction to the bad news. When the king failed to respond favorably to his troops, he took courage to rebuke the king to his face for three

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Fokkelman. 241.
[46] Ibid. 245.
[47] Ibid.

reasons. First, he put to shame his servants who had risked their own lives to deliver his life and those of his household (19:5). Second, his reaction showed that he hated the people who loved him and counted on love in return;[a] but loved Absalom who hated him and intended to rob his throne (19:6a). Third, he acted as if the situation would be right if Absalom were alive and all the commanders and soldiers were dead, as if they meant nothing to him (19:6b)! Then Joab delivered an ultimatum, and threatened that if he should continue to isolate himself, all the people would abandon him, which would be the greatest disaster that he had ever experienced from his youth (19:7). Although he seems excessively harsh to his superior king David, the narrator shows by way of contrast that David has failed in his calling as king, protector and guardian of his State and his people!

However, Joab's violent speech against David (19:6-8) and actions against Absalom (18:14-15) led to serious consequences as seen in the episode following the sample passage, which shows that David was deeply wounded by them, and so was determined to make Joab reap the fruit of his insubordination. For, instead of the oath Joab took, "I swear by the Lord," to threaten abandonment and the worst disaster "from your youth until now" (19:7), David used the negative formula of self-cursing and declared, "May God do so to me…" if he would not replace Joab with Amasa as commander of the army "continually," meaning for life (19:13)![b] By appointing Amasa "in place of Joab," David came into alignment with Absalom's action in 17:25, which also set Amasa over the army "in place of Joab." Although Joab responded by killing Amasa to secure his position as army commander (20:10, 23), David eventually left word for Solomon to kill him for having shed the blood of Amasa and Abner (1 Kgs 2:5). Solomon did so accordingly, and had Joab killed despite the fact that he sought sanctuary inside the tent of the Lord (1 Kgs 2:28-35). By the specific mention of his being struck down inside the tent of the Lord, the narrator may want to apply the Lord's principle of retribution to Joab for the brutal

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[a] R. N. Whybray, The Succession Narrative. Studies in Biblical Theology, 2nd Series, 9 (London: SCM Press, 1968), 42.
[b] Fokkelman, 277ff.

murder not only of the two commanders, but also of Uriah the Hittite as well.

Although human characters' behavior and speech may well reveal their own motivations, attitudes and moral nature, being self-deceptive at times, they may not always expose their inner qualities or paint a true picture of reality. Apart from the way retribution is played out, which reveals the moral responsibility of the characters, such as in the case of Joab, the narrator's comments also reflect the true nature and inward traits of the person's character.[50] This is clearly demonstrated in the portrait of Absalom, who had not uttered a single word in this sample passage. By citing Absalom's reason for setting up, while he was alive, a pillar named after himself: "I have no son to carry on the memory of my name" only a few chapters after the authorial comment that he had three sons (2 Sam 14:27), the narrator seems to purposely let Absalom's statement stand as a self-fulfilled prophecy, for even had his sons lived, they could not have obtained the crown to perpetuate his name. And instead of perpetuating his name as a powerful king as originally intended, the pillar will perpetually commemorate him as an accursed fratricide and rebel,[51] for the great heap of stones covering Absalom's dead body portrays the death of a rebellious son as prescribed by the Law (Deut 21:21).

Contexts

While the above literary features of Hebrew narratives are clues to the meaning and significance of the biblical passage, they are but bits and pieces of insights that do not necessarily reflect the main theme or give a clear focus of what the passage is meant to teach. Insights gained from the study of these literary characteristics must be examined in the light of the passage's literary and historical contexts, to see how the part is related to the whole and vice versa, in order to discover the main theme or message the original author or the final redactor intended to convey. In the following sections, the sample passage is examined in terms of its literary and historical contexts.

Literary.   The sample passage functions at several different levels as a component

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[50] Pratt, 138-40.
[51] McCarter Jr., 407.

of larger narratives of Absalom's revolt (2 Sam 13-19); of the Succession Narrative (2 Sam 9-20 and 1 Kgs 1-2);[52] and of the Deuteronomistic History (Joshua to Kings).

Since Absalom was totally silent in the sample passage, an examination of its immediate context of his revolt contributes significantly to understanding the sample passage. Compared to his siblings, Absalom had the most recorded discourses with his king father, but in all such instances, he took the initiative. A study of these instances (13:20-29; 14:21-33; 15:1-14) sheds light on his character and his relationship with his king father. His first initiation was an invitation for the king father to attend his shearing party in which he had planned his half-brother Amnon's assassination, in revenge for the latter's rape of his sister Tamar. But the king declined with an expressed concern that if the whole household were to go, it would be a burden to him (13:24-27). Apparently, David's attitude toward Absalom at that time was warm and caring. But it was probably not reciprocal with Absalom. His motive for wanting his father to witness Amnon's assassination was not expressed. But since the king had not done anything on Tamar's behalf while Absalom suffered the pain of witnessing her desolate condition on a daily basis for two years, it would not be unlikely that Absalom wanted his father to suffer a similar pain of witnessing the death of his crown prince (13:20-23).

The second time he initiated a meeting with his father was two years after he had been brought back from Geshur, during which his father would not see him. But he was so eager to see his father that he had Joab's field burned down when the latter would not respond to his call for help in arranging a meeting. From what he told Joab, "Why have I come from Geshur? It would be better for me still to be there! Now therefore, let me see the king's face, and if there is iniquity in me, let him put me to death" (14:32), it is evident that he would rather receive his father's discipline than his silent treatment. At that meeting, the king kissed him, which may signify reconciliation, but there was no discipline, no meaningful communication, and therefore no closure to the matter! (B-Worksheet #1h)

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[52] Leonhard Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, trans. Michael D. Rutter and David M. Gunn (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982).

It was not until four years later that he started the revolt. What he did during that period was also revealing. He told the people who came to his father for settling disputes, "...Oh that one would appoint me judge in the land, then everyone who has any suit or case could come to me, and I would give the person justice" (15:4). Here it reflects the longing voice of a crown prince who was ready to take responsibility, yet remained unnoticed by his king father, despite the fact that he did it every day! Finally, when all attempts to get his father's recognition failed, he approached his father for permission to go to Hebron, with the excuse of worshiping the Lord there. Not realizing his revolt scheme, the king father blessed him, again with no questions asked. When the revolt was finally underway, David expressed his fear of his son, as he told his officials, "Arise and let us flee, for otherwise none of us shall escape from Absalom...lest he overtake us quickly..." (15:14). It was as though he was taking his son seriously for the first time despite all previous attempts Absalom initiated to get his attention.

From its immediate context of Absalom's revolt, it is evident that the king father had not been involved in his son's life. Although there were evidences that he did love and spoil him, allowing him to enjoy or abuse his royal privileges such as setting fire on Joab's field (2 Sam 14:30), and providing himself with a chariot and horses, with fifty men to run ahead of him (2 Sam 15:1). He made little attempts to understand his emotional pains, frustrations and aspirations, nor to build up his character and prepare him to take responsibility as a crown prince. When he had committed grave sins such as murder, David's style of handling conflicts was one of avoidance rather than confrontation or discipline, and he even had to rely on Joab to bring about reconciliation. Eventually, it was the Lord Himself who brought disaster on Absalom, when he had gone so far as defiling his king father's concubines (2 Sam 17:14). And the sample passage is the culminating tragedy of a rebellious son whose death was brought about by his own sin as well as by his king father's failure in guiding and disciplining him.

The sample passage in its immediate context of Absalom's revolt is also a part of the larger context of the Succession Narrative. As Flanagan observes, Absalom's revolt is recognized as the central feature of the Succession Narrative, because the account has the lengthiest coverage

and literary balance is found surrounding it.[53] And Wesselius further explains that since David's
flight and subsequent return as a result of Absalom's revolt are placed symmetrically around the
battle of 2 Samuel 18, the latter can be viewed as the central scene in the entire Narrative.[54] As
such, the sample passage must be intimately related to the theme and purpose of the Succession
Narrative.

Many scholars have made various proposals as to the purpose of the Succession
Narrative, of which three are often noted. Rost's original proposal for the purpose of the
Succession Narrative (2 Sam 9-20; 1 Kg 1-2) is the elimination of sons other than Solomon as the
legitimate heir to David's throne. But apart from the section 1 King 1-2, which scholars are in
general agreement with him, his hypothesis has been greatly challenged by recent scholars,
primarily due to the observation that Absalom's rebellion is a central feature of the whole
narrative (from chapters 13 to 19).[55] Other scholars see the Succession Narrative as Court
Apologetic, which seeks to defend David's claim to the throne.[56] But this proposal has also been
challenged by scholars who observe that, contrary to all traditions outside of it, David is
portrayed in the most negative light in the Succession Narrative; therefore, they see the account as
primarily one of critique rather than of justification of his kingship.[57] Of the three proposals, the
last one seems to find the greatest support from the sample passage, as well as from its references
that link to other parts of the Succession Narrative and to the Deuteronomistic History as
demonstrated below. *(B-Worksheet #1j)*

The sample passage is apparently a critique of king David not only as a king, but also as a

[53] James W. Flanagan. "Court History or Succession Document? A Study of 2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings
1-2)." Journal of Biblical Literature 91 (1971): 177.

[54] J. W. Wesselius. "Joab's Death and the Central Theme of the Succession Narrative (2 Samuel IX-1
Kings III." Vetus Testamentum 40, 3 (1990): 340.

[55] See Flanagan. See also Peter R. Ackroyd. "The Succession Narrative (so-called)." Interpretation 35
(1981): 383-96.

[56] P. Kyle McCarter Jr.. "Plots. True or False': The Succession Narrative as Court Apologetic."
Interpretation 35 (1981): 355-67.

[57] John Van Seters. "Problems in the Literary Analysis of the Court History of David." Journal for the
Study of the Old Testament (1976): 22-29. See also Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis. "King David of Israel." in
Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives. vol. 2. ed. Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis. et al. (Nashville:
Abingdon Press. 1982): 204-19.

father. His failure as a king is evident by the high value he placed on the life and well being of his son to the neglect of his loyal supporters who risked their lives for his throne; thus showing his self-centeredness, abuse of royal privileges and betrayal of their loyalty. Apart from the immediate context of Absalom's revolt discussed in the previous section, David's failure as a father is implied most clearly in his outcry of sorrow upon Absalom's death: "Would I had died instead of you" (18:33), which may be linked to his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. The expression reflects the burden of guilt, which may also explain the out-pouring of strong emotion at this time. The prophet Nathan's announcement of the Lord's punishment, "You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife... Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house..." (12:9-10) could not have faded from his memory. Ackerman goes even as far as saying that David's outcry expressed the wish that divine judgment would have fallen on the crime's original perpetrator rather than on the next generation![58] To say the least, His own failure in life example had disqualified and paralyzed him from confronting and rebuking his own sons, for Amnon's raping of Tamar and Absalom's killing of Amnon were no more guilty than he was toward Basheba and Uriah. So the lack of discipline could well have contributed to the tragic consequence of Absalom's revolt and death.

Finally, the closing narrative remark, repeated in both episode 1 and 2 of the sample passage about Israel fleeing, each one to his tent (18:17d & 19:8d), not only alludes to the Succession Narrative, it has ramification for the broader context of the Deuteronomistic history. For the reference apparently alludes to 2 Samuel 20:1 and 1 Kings 12:16, both in the context of the Israelites' denouncing loyalty to the house of David. The reference in Kings closes by telling David to look after his own house, probably referring to the internal conflicts in the royal court, which inevitably inflict sufferings on the people, as in the case of Absalom's revolt. This remark points to the cause of his failure as a king being arisen from his failure in managing his royal household. Hence, the sample passage in its context of the Succession Narrative may be linked to

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[58] James S. Ackermann. "Knowing Good and Evil: A Literary Analysis of the Court History in 2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings 1-2." Journal of Biblical Literature 109, no. 1 (1990): 50.

the purpose of the Deuteronomistic history as well.

According to Noth, the Deuteronomistic history attempts to explain the destruction of the Temple and Israel's exile as the Lord's judgment for Israel's violation of the covenant as expressed in Deuteronomy[9] Although king David was held up as a standard for evaluating the kings of Judah in the Deuteronomistic history (1 Kgs 11:6, 2 Kgs 16:2, etc.), within the Succession Narrative, he was portrayed just as negatively as the other kings in violating the Lord's commands in Deuteronomy. While the Law demanded that kings follow closely all the words of the law, not to take many wives, or consider himself better than his brothers (Deut 17:16-20), David committed murder and adultery, accumulated wives and concubines, and placed himself and his royal household above his people. Apart from violating the laws in Deuteronomy, David and his the royal household became a burden to the people as forewarned by the prophet Samuel when the people demanded kings to rule over them like all the nations, and ultimate, he himself even failed Israel's expectations for a king (1 Samuel 8). *(B-Worksheet #1k)*

His sons Absalom and Adonijah are described as having provided for themselves chariots and horsemen, and fifty men as runners before them (2 Sam 15:1 and 1 Kgs 1:5 cf. 1 Sam 8:11). David is described as setting over his army commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds (2 Sam 18:1 cf. 1 Sam 8:12a). David's demand of Saul's servant Ziba to have his fifteen sons and twenty servants cultivate Saul's land and bring in the produce for his grandson Mephibosheth (2 Sam 9:10 cf. 1 Sam 8:12b) reflects a common practice of the royal family enjoying such privileges at the expense of their servants' labor. In addition, the list of David's court officials in 2 Samuel 20:23-26 consists of an Adoram over the forced labor, which hints at the beginning of excessive yoke placed over Israel in his reign (cf 1 Sam 8:16-17), leading eventually to Israel's protest and stoning to death the same Adoram who was still in charge of forced labor during Rehoboam's reign, when the splitting of the kingdom occurred (1 Kgs 12:16-

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[9] Noth, Martin. The History of Israel, rev. trans. by P. R. Ackroyd (A. and C. Black, 1960). Cited by Marvin Sweeney. "Form Criticism." in To Each Its Own Meaning, ed. Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes, rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press. 1999). 64.

20). Finally, David as portrayed in the Succession Narrative had also failed Israel's expectations for a king, which included judging the people and going out before them to fight their battles (1 Sam 8:20). He had failed to exercise justice in his own life and among his children, as well as to hear the people's cases, as evident by Absalom's success in stealing the heart of the people by doing so (2 Sam 15:2-6). He had also failed to lead in the battle against the Ammonites (2 Sam 11), and that against Absalom (2 Sam 18), and to put down the revolt of Sheba (2 Sam 20).

Historical. From the various levels of literary contexts, it is evident that the sample passage that focuses on Absalom's death, and David's emotional response to it, against the backdrop of the loyalty of his servants, gives a critique of David both as father and as king. Unlike the rest of the historical texts, which portray David in a positive light and thus serve as propaganda for his regime and justification of his rule over Israel and Judah, the main body of the Succession Narration (2 Sam 10-20) points to David as the source of problems both with his own house as well as with the State. Many scholars therefore conclude that an exilic Deuteronomistic Historian was responsible for its final redaction,[60] perhaps to justify the exile on the ground of the failure of kingship and David's contribution to it. However, this is not just a story about human weakness that accounts for the exile, but also about human repentance and divine compassion that can break the fatal chain of cause and effect.[61] As Wharton observes, David is portrayed most sympathetically when he is most conscious of his radical dependence on the gracious purposes of God during his flee from Absalom.[62] The exilic author may want to demonstrate from the example of God's gracious restoration of David to his kingship in Jerusalem upon his humiliation and repentance, so as to give hope to the exilic community of the same gracious restoration after their repentance and humiliation of the Babylonian exile. *(B-Worksheet #10)*

Apart from the larger purpose of giving hope to the exilic community of their restoration, the purpose of the sample passage alone, which focuses on human weaknesses is probably to

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[60] Beek. 168. See also Ackroyd. 369.
[61] Beek. 168.
[62] Wharton. 351-2.

demonstrate the close tie between David's failure as a father and his failure as a king and the corporate consequences of such failures. His personal sin and mismanagement of his royal household resulted in the tragic death of his son, and his personal grief over it paralyzed his ability to take responsibility as a king. Such reactions reveal his priority of concern for his personal affair over that for the State and his servants, and thus a betrayal of the latter's loyalty, leading to their utter disappointment in him, giving way eventually to the corporate consequences of a divided kingdom, the fall of Judah and the exile.

The story also speaks to the post-exilic community in a way that supports the teaching of their leaders, which was to manage and sanctify the household in accordance with the Law for the security and restoration of the kingdom. Echoes of their failure in managing the household according to the Law may be found in Ezra's and Nehemiah's rebuke of the post-exilic community for giving their sons and daughters in marriage to foreigners (Ezr 10; Neh 13:23-27). Similar concerns may be seen in the preaching of the prophet Malachi, who rebuked the people for marrying foreign wives or divorcing their first wives (Mal 2:10-16).

Similarly, the story speaks to contemporary Christians that finds support in the teaching of the New Testament: Christians must bear good testimony in their lives and in managing their household before they can be entrusted with the responsibility of managing the church. For the Apostle Paul teaches, "Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife...self-controlled...He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him...If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?" (1 Tim 3:2-5). Obviously, failure in managing personal or family life will lead to corporate consequences that hurt the witness of the whole Christian community in the world.

Theological Theme and Message *(B-Worksheet #1m)*

Personal sins and unresolved family conflicts result not only in personal tragedies but they also lead to corporate consequences that have detrimental effects for the kingdom of God.

Wisdom

Wisdom, a concept found among all peoples in the world, may be seen as a capacity that

is inherent in human beings, who are created with the potential to think, speak and act

intelligently in order to live successful lives in human society.[63] Biblical wisdom is found to

express not only Israel's own cultural and religious tradition, but also those from the Egyptians,

Greeks, Sumerians, Babylonians, etc., assuming they can learn from others about how to live.[64] In

biblical literature, the word "wisdom" *hokmah*, often refers to persons of a wide range of abilities,

e.g. those who crafted the priestly garments, the tabernacle, the ark, and other furnishings (Ex

28:3, 31:6), artisans who built Solomon's temple (1 Chr 22:15, 28:21), counselors of the royal

court (2 Sam 16:23), etc.[65] Above all, wisdom par excellence belonged to the ruler (2 Sam

14:20b), especially Solomon, to whose request of wisdom God replied: "I will give you a wise

and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be..."

(1 Kgs 3:12).

By the time of the monarchy, personnel of the centralized administration—scribes,

secretaries, recorders, counselors—had to be educated and socialized into the internationally

accepted ethos and etiquette of public life.[66] So the term "the wise" in Proverbs 1:6, "the words of

the wise and their riddles," suggests to some scholars that they constituted such a professional

class at the time.[67] But it was to Solomon's authorship that most wisdom writings were attributed.

The reason is that the tradition about Solomon as the embodiment of royal wisdom and the

supreme example of the sage was firmly established by the time of writing, and it was a way of

bringing these writings within the sapient tradition and bestowing on them a special authority.[68]

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[63] Claus Westermann. Roots of Wisdom: The Oldest Proverbs of Israel and Other Peoples, trans. J. Daryl Charles (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1995), 1.

[64] Charles F. Melchert, Wise Teaching: Biblical Wisdom and Educational Ministry (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1998), 3.

[65] Ibid., 4.

[66] Joseph Blenkinsopp, Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 6.

[67] Roland E. Murphy, The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 3.

[68] Blenkinsopp, Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament, 2-3.

Biblical wisdom materials are found mostly in Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes, where the word *hokmah* appears more frequently than the rest of the Hebrew Bible combined.[69] Although the three books have many literary characteristics in common, they also have their own unique features. Therefore, discussions on their literary characteristics and contexts will take into consideration both their common and their unique features. The sample passage selected for interpretation is Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:26, primarily due to its relevance for the contemporary students and to the lack of attention given to the book in general. Therefore, the discussion on Ecclesiastes will focus on this passage and on texts closely related to it. Its theological theme and message will be presented at the end of the chapter.

Literary Characteristics

A comment made by opponents of the prophet Jeremiah: "Come and let us devise plans against Jeremiah. Surely the law is not going to be lost to the priest, nor counsel to the sage, nor the divine word to the prophet" (Jer 18:18) has led some scholars to see the prophets, the priests and the wise as three channels by which Israel understood revelation as taking place.[70] However, in contrast to the prophets who identified their words as the very words of God, and to the priests who also claimed access to God's will through the Law of Moses, the wisdom writers believed that their experience of the natural world and their reflection on it gave them unique insight into the divine mind and will.[71] Therefore, before considering their literary characteristics, a foundational wisdom concept and approach, with its focus on the observation and reflection of nature and experience, are discussed below.

Nature and Experience. According to Perdue, wisdom writers regard God as "the architect who, through wisdom, crafts a well-ordered cosmos that sustains and enhances life."[72]

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[69] Melchert, 10.

[70] Anthony R. Ceresko, Introduction to Old Testament Wisdom: A Spirituality for Liberation (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1999), 21. See also Walter Brueggemann, The Creative Word: Canon as a Model for Biblical Education (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 8ff.

[71] Ceresko, 21.

[72] Leo G. Perdue, Wisdom and Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 122.

As their Creator, He has endowed humans with organs of perception (Prov 20:12) that enable them to receive instruction through observation of His creation, so they may experience well-being in life.[73] Therefore, the sages were keen at observing and reflecting upon this created order in the realms of nature and experience, so that wisdom can be attained, lessons learned and laws for conduct established.[74] Proverbs 24:30-34* provides such an example:

> I passed by the field of the sluggard,
> And by the vineyard of the person lacking sense;
> And behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles,
> Its surface was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down.
> And I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, and received instruction.
> "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,"
> Then your poverty will come as a robber, and your want like an armed person.

Thus, just by observation and reflection, the wisdom student is able to learn a valuable lesson on work and laziness from the field itself. In other words, as Melchert puts it, "the created order speaks," and wisdom texts assume and intend to convey that as one learns to read the ways of life, one learns to discern the ways of God.[75]

In Israel's wisdom tradition, this created order expresses itself also in the area of retribution or reward/punishment,[76] as reflected in the proverb: "Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever rolls a stone, it will come back on the person" (Prov 26:27*). Here the physical and moral orders alike seem to be a natural consequence of the realities of creation, rather than a punishment brought on by an outside agency.[77] However, as the Creator who has conquered chaos by creating form out of void and light out of darkness, God remains in control also as the judge of the world, as Proverb 11:21 insists. "Surely the wicked will not go unpunished; but the descendents of the righteous will be delivered." When such an expected natural order or principle of retribution is not discernable or contrary to present experience, wisdom writers issue their protests to the wisdom tradition or to God Himself, as in the cases of Job and Qoheleth, to be discussed in this Chapter. *(B-Worksheet #2a)*

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[73] Ibid.
[74] Murphy, 115.
[75] Melchert, 43, 59.
[76] Murphy, 116.
[77] Melchert, 32.

Observation and Reflection.   Due to its focus on observation and reflection of nature and experience, a close reading of wisdom passages must pay attention to verbal clues that describe them, as well as the resulting conclusions with their reasons.

For example, in the sample passage, Qoheleth's observations are stated by the common expression "I saw/have seen..." (1:14) and sometimes by "and yet I know..." (2:14); although the same verbs can also be used to describe reflections or conclusions (e.g. "I have seen" in 2:24). Reflections are found or implied in statements or rhetorical questions such as "What does it accomplish?" (2:2); "Thus I considered all my activities..."(2:11); and "Who knows...?" (2:19). Conclusions are most clearly expressed by the much-repeated vanity statements: "This is vanity!" (1:14; 2:1,11, etc.) and its companion phrase "striving after wind" (1:17; 2:11, etc.), "There was no profit under the sun" (2:11), as well as by joy statements such as "There is nothing better...than to eat and drink..." (2:24). Reasons are often given after the conclusions are stated, with the common connecting preposition "because" or "for" (1:18 & 2:26, etc.).

Another literary feature unique to the wisdom approach is the device of a conversation with one's heart, referring to it as if it were an independent entity.[7] In the sample passage alone, it takes many forms of expressions, and, depending on the different English versions, the word "heart" in Hebrew may be translated as "mind," "myself," etc. For example, "I set my mind to seek/to know..." (1:13/17) and "I explored with my heart..." (2:3) may imply self-determination to doing something; "I said to myself...and my mind has observed..." (1:16) may reveal purposeful self-reflection; and "I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure..." (2:10) and "I completely despaired..." literally, "I turned to make my heart despair" (2:20), may refer to the heart as the seat of emotions, etc. (B-Worksheet #2b)

Sometimes, deliberations of various or contradictory perspectives are expressed to invite the audience to think along with him, as seen in 2:13-16. Here, Qoheleth recognizes that wisdom

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[7] Choon L. Seow. Ecclesiastes: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary. ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman. Anchor Bible Commentary. vol. 18C (Garden City. N.Y.: Doubleday. 1997), 41ff.

has advantage over folly as light over darkness; yet, on the other hand, he argues that both the wise and the fool will face death. So he raises the rhetorical question, "Why then was I more wise?" Then a conclusion is reached that this also is vanity, the reason being that there will not be a memory of the wise more than that of the fool (2:16). By so expressing these deliberations or even debates, the author attempts to persuade his audience to accept his conclusion.

Proverbs and Sayings. While wisdom takes on multiple forms of expression or sub-genres, each with its own distinctive traits and rules for identification and interpretation, the most characteristic literary form is that of the proverb *mashal*, literally "a comparison," which provides a rule or paradigm for understanding by means of a comparison or an analogy.[79] It is a brief and pointed saying that relates to human character and conduct, and it is expressed by a two-member parallel construction typical of Hebrew poetry.[80] Proverbs are time-honored community experiences, handed down from the past with the purpose of perpetuating the societal order and mores.[81] Therefore, they are explicitly didactic, some with an observation of regularity in nature in the first colon, then relate it to an action in the moral order in the second, so as to bring human conduct into line with a cosmic law of regularity and order, as seen in Proverbs 26:20.[82]

> For lack of wood the fire goes out,
> And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

Some proverbs are synonymous; others make the point by contrast or comparison,[83] as in the following examples respectively.

> Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling (16:18).

> Hatred stirs up strife; but love covers all transgressions (10:12).

> If a poor person is hated by relatives;
> How much more is the person shunned by friends! (19:7*).

The saying, usually expressed in the indicative mood, is commonly found in two parallel

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[79] Ceresko, 34.
[80] Blenkinsopp. Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament. 20, 22.
[81] Osborne, 192.
[82] Blenkinsopp. Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament, 23.
[83] Ibid., 23-24.

lines,[54] but it is not quite as developed or attained such a universal "stature" as the proverb.[55]

Murphy distinguishes between the observational and the openly didactic sayings: the former

describes reality, or just the way it is, thus it is open-ended and subject to verification; the latter

aims at promoting a given ideal, value or a course of action.[56] It is the specific promise of benefit,

often by God's intervention, that distinguishes the two types respectively as illustrated below:[57]

> Hope deferred makes the heart sick,
> But desire fulfilled is a tree of life (13:12).

> A person who is gracious to the poor lends to the Lord,
> And He will repay the person accordingly (19:17*).

Didactic sayings can be specified as admonitions or instructions that are either positive

(command) or negative (prohibition), as shown respectively below:

> Commit your works to the Lord,
> And your plans will be established (16:3).

> Do not rob the poor because they are poor...
> For the Lord will plead their case... (22:22a* and 23a).

Numerical sayings, which serve to classify and order the phenomena of nature, announce

a specific number of items and then go on to enumerate them.[58] The mode is open-ended and

allows alternative answers.[59] For example, the first line to Proverbs 30:24-28 introduces four

things on earth that are small, yet extremely wise, and the rest of the saying tells what they are

(ants, badgers, locusts and lizard), and in what ways they are small and wise. Other numerical

sayings drive home their truths by using the formula x / x+1 in the title as follows (30:18-19):

> There are three things which are too wonderful for me,
> Four which I do not understand:
> The way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock,
> The way of a ship in the middle of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid.

In this case, three is x and four is x+1, and the first line introduces the subject as things too

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[54] Murphy, 7.
[55] Osborne, 196.
[56] Murphy, 8.
[57] William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard Jr., Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, consulting ed. Kermit A. Ecklebarger (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1993), 314.
[58] Blenkinsopp, Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament, 35.
[59] Brueggemann, The Creative Word, 77.

wonderful to understand, with the greatest emphasis placed on the last item.[90] The mysterious elements in the first three are meant to lead to a consideration of the deep mystery of sexual attraction.[91] Behind the numerical sayings often lies the riddle form.[92] At the level of popular usage, they are a means of entertainment, such as that used at Samson's wedding feast (Jud 14:14); but in the deepest level, they are analogous to human existence, with its riddle-like quality about it.[93] *(B-Worksheet #2c)*

Proverbial sayings are also found in Job and Ecclesiastes. In the book of Job, they are often cited by Job's friends, just to be refuted by him later. For example, Zophar cites, "...the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the godless momentary..." (20:5), but refuted by Job, "Why do the wicked still live, continue on, also become very powerful?" (21:7). Qoheleth makes use of a dialectic style, affirming but then challenging or qualifying traditional teaching.[94] For example, he gives the typical contrast between the wise and the fool: "The eyes of the wise are in his head, but fools walk in darkness," then he adds the comment that it does not make any difference, since they are both subject to the same fate (2:14*).[95] Sometimes, he openly subjects conventional wisdom to criticism, e.g., "There are righteous persons who perish in their righteousness, and there are wicked persons who prolong their lives in their wickedness" (7:15*). *(B-Worksheet #2d)*

Poetry. Westermann finds in Proverbs sixteen poems in chapters 1-9, 22:17-24:34, and 30-31, of which two types are distinguished: the proverbial and the didactic.[96] The proverbial poems tend to amplify or alter the words of exhortation preceding them. For example, the exhortation in 23:20-21: "Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine..." is followed by the proverbial poem in 23:29-35, beginning in the form of a riddle "Who has woe? Who has sorrow?" (v.29),

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[90] Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, 314.
[91] Blenkinsopp, Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament, 38.
[92] Osborne, 196.
[93] Blenkinsopp, Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament, 38.
[94] Cereska, 93.
[95] Blenkinsopp, Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament, 71.
[96] Westermann, Roots of Wisdom, 98ff.

and a solution "those who linger long over wine" (v.30), then the consequences of excessive

drinking are portrayed humorously in verses 33-35:[97]

> Your eyes will see strange things;
> And your mind will utter perverse things....
> "They struck me, but I did not become ill! They beat me, but I did not know it.
> When I shall awake? I will seek another drink."

The didactic poems of chapters 1-9, 22:17-21 and 23:12-28 are characterized by the series of

summons to listen, with address and substantiation in the form of wisdom's praise.[98] Another

kind of didactic poems is the acrostic poem composed according to the order of the Hebrew

alphabets, with a function to facilitate memorization, and perhaps also to give the sense of

making an all-inclusive statement,[99] as seen in final portrait of Lady Wisdom as a climax at the

end of the book (31:10-31). *(B-Worksheet #2e)*

The book of Job also consists of hymns of praise (5:9-16; 9:5-12; 12:13-25 & 26:5-14),[100]

wisdom hymn (ch.28), and the individual lament (ch.3, 7, 10, 13, 29-31). Job's two soliloquies in

chapters 3 and 29-31 are given in the formal features of the individual lament.[101] The former

consists of the "complaint," expressed in a series of rhetorical questions over why life has been

given to him who longs for death (vv11-26), and the "imprecation," expressed in a series of

curses upon his own birth (vv1-10). The latter is arranged in the order of "motivation," by

recounting God's goodness upon him in the past (ch.29), "complaint," of people insulting him

and of God refusing to answer his cries for mercy (ch.30) and "motivation," by declaring his own

innocence (ch.31).

The book of Ecclesiastes also has three important poems. The most well-known and often

quoted is the poem on times and seasons in 3:1-8, which is about God's determination of human

events and the appropriate human response to it.[102] The other two: one on nature and toil in the

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[97] Ibid. 95.

[98] Ibid. 98.

[99] Blenkinsopp. Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament. 35.

[100] Osborne. 197.

[101] Perdue. 125.

[102] Seow. 169.

beginning (1:3-11) and one on youth and old age at the end (11:7-12:7), frame the book with the emphasis on the inevitable cycle of nature and the passing of human generations, thus creating the sense of a mechanical and monotonous existence beyond human control.

Disputation. Many scholars regard it as the major literary form of the book of Job, with the appearance of key words for legal court proceedings such as: lawsuit or case, condemn, guilt or guilty, judge or judgment, innocent, just, justice or justify, etc. Graffy classifies it as the "dialogue disputation," in which each of the parties speaks, as distinguished from the prophetic disputation, in which only the prophet speaks, and reports the opponent's view.[103] Murray proposes three components as constitutive of the disputation genre: thesis, counter-thesis and dispute.[104] Disputes may be seen as arguments substantiating the thesis or the counter-thesis, while in refutation of the other. *(B-Worksheet #2f)*

An example of how the three components work may be seen in Job's disputation with his friends on the issue of God's justice. Job's friends' thesis is that God does not pervert justice, and they appeal to the arguments of wisdom tradition to substantiate their thesis (4:7; 8:3 and 8); but Job's counter-thesis is that God does, and he appeals to his own experiences and what he sees as happening in society to substantiate his counter-thesis (9:17, 22-24 and 10:7).

Didactic Narrative. The form is found in the prologue and the epilogue framing the main body of the book of Job (1-2; 42:7-17). In the prologue, the omniscient narrator describes the crises Job faces. The main question posed by the satan in the prologue, which the rest of the book attempts to answer, is whether or not Job will remain faithful to God, having lost all his possessions and inflicted by a painful and humiliating skin disease. After a lengthy series of disputation over Job's innocent suffering in the main body of the book, the epilogue provides the resolutions. (See the previous section on Narrative for detailed discussion on this genre).

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[103] Adrian Graffy, A Prophet Confronts His People: The Disputation Speech in the Prophets. Analecta Biblica 104 (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1984), 22. See discussion under Disputation of the Prophetic section.
[104] D. F. Murray, "The Rhetoric of Disputation: Re-examination of a Prophetic Genre," Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 38 (1987): 99.

Royal Testament. Scholars have made many proposals for the genre of Ecclesiastes. Perdue finds two types of Ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature that provide the closest form-critical parallels to Ecclesiastes. the grave biographies and royal testaments, both literary fiction of a dead person who, speaking from the tomb, undertakes to instruct the living in the wisdom of life.[105] On the basis of these parallels, Perdue regards the book as a fictional testament of Israel's famous king Solomon, who is presented as speaking to his audience either in his old age, shortly before death, or perhaps from the tomb.[106] David's instruction to Soloman as recorded in 1 Kings 2:1-9 may be classified as a royal testament. Based on the identification "King over Israel" (1:12), Crenshaw sees Ecclesiastes as a "royal fiction," an ancient practice common in early Egyptian circles and Sumerian literature of presenting important teaching as insights from the society's supreme ruler.[107] Based on its autobiographical nature and its use of problems experienced by the sage as an example for others, and on its Egyptian parallels that reflect the emptiness of life surrounding the throne, Osborne classifies sample passage (1:12-2:26) as a royal confession.[108]

Structure and Content. Apart from the collections of individual proverbial sayings, which may be interpreted on the basis of their parallelism and with reference to other sayings on a similar topic,[109] larger works often reflect a chiastic structure, within which individual sub-sections may be interpreted. Delineation of the structure and its sub-sections may be done on the bases of sub-genres, verbal hinges, repetition of words, themes and expressions, etc.

The sample passage (1:12-2:26) is separated from and sandwiched between two poems: one on nature and toil preceding it (1:3-11) and another on times and seasons following it (3:1-8). The literary unit expresses itself as an autobiographical royal account of King Solomon, with a chiastic structure of five sub-sections as below:

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[105] Perdue. 202.
[106] Ibid.
[107] James L. Crenshaw. "Odd Book in Ecclesiastes." Bible Review 6 (Oct. 1990): 31.
[108] Osborne. 197.
[109] Ibid. 199.

A	Introduction: the royal investigation	1:12-18	
B	Pleasure and Work	2:1-11	
C	Wisdom and Folly		2:12-17
B'	Labor and Succession	2:18-23	
A'	Conclusion: the Divine grant	2:24-26	

The introductory sub-section A (1:12-18) describes the two kinds of investigation that Qoheleth engages in (1:12-15 and 1:16-18), as indicated by the repeated phrase "I set my mind," literally, "I give my heart," referring to his determination to seek out all that is done under the heavens (1:13a); and to seek to know wisdom, madness and folly (1:17a). Another important repetition is the main verb "see," referring to his having seen all the works done under the sun (1:14) and his having seen an abundance of wisdom and knowledge (1:16), so as to demonstrate the thoroughness of his investigation. His credential as king over Jerusalem (1:12) and his superiority over his predecessors in Jerusalem (1:16) are given to warrant sufficient resources for the task. Finally, his conclusion: "all is vanity" and/or "striving after wind" are repeated in 1:14b and 17b, along with their respective reasons in 1:15 and 18. The key word "vanity" *habel* literally, "a breath, whiff, puff, vapor," refers to something that is elusive and cannot be grasped.[110] The expression "striving after wind" *reut ruah* indicates a desire for or a pursuit of things that have no abiding value or are insubstantial.[111] *(B-Worksheet #2g)*

In its corresponding sub-section A' (2:24-26) at the end, Qoheleth advises his audience how to live, since he has concluded that everything in life is vanity. First of all, he makes his "joy" statement that there is nothing better for a person than to eat and drink and to find goodness in his work, which means to accept and rejoice in life's goodness that comes from the intimate association of family and friends, as expressed by "eating and drinking," and from human labor.[112] For he sees that such goodness is from the hand of God. The main verbs here are "give"

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[110] Seow, 42.
[111] Ibid., 121-22.
[112] Perdue, 242.

and "see," both found also in sub-section A. However, in contrast to A in which Qoheleth gives his heart to investigate all works and wisdom; here, it is God who gives: wisdom and knowledge and joy to whom He favors; but the preoccupation of gathering and collecting to the sinner, just to turn over to another whom God favors. In contrast to A in which Qoheleth claims that "he has seen it all," the verb "see" here refers to his advice of making oneself "see" or experience goodness in one's labor by eating and drinking, for he now "sees" or realizes that such a gift is from the hands of God. Finally, It is ironic that in this last verse (2:26), the sinner is given the preoccupation of gathering and collecting just to give to another, whereas in the very first verse (1:12), the king in Jerusalem (the greatest and wisest, see 1:16) is introduced as Qoheleth, literally a "Gatherer," who labors to gather wealth for himself (2:8) just to benefit others (2:18-21) (Seow 158)![113] The greatest and wisest king turns out to be no more than a sinner and fool before God!

Sub-section B (2:1-11) on pleasure and works is a detailed description of what he has alluded to in his introduction (A). Beginning with 2:1, Qoheleth explains his approach of first conducting an experiment through engaging in all kinds of activities that would presumably give him pleasure, with the intention of experiencing goodness in life (2:1a). But then he concludes that pleasure, in and of itself, is vanity (2:1b), and he elaborates that laughter is madness and pleasure does not accomplish anything (2:2). Beginning with the clause "I explored with my mind (literally, heart)" in 2:3, which serves as a hinge back to the introduction in 1:13, he restates his investigation by wisdom on what humankind should do under the heavens, so they may see or experience goodness in life.

Focusing on what humankind should do, the main key verb of this sub-section is "do," which appears 7 times (2:2,3,5,6,8,11,11), along with other verbs that describe the works being done, such as build, plant, buy and gather (2:4,4,5,7,8). All these activities show that as a king, presumably Solomon, he has almost unlimited resources and authority at his disposal for such an investigation (1 Kgs 10:23-25). At the end of all such works and endeavors: building luxurious

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[113] Seow, 158.

dwellings and landscaping, accumulating wealth and treasures, possessing concubines, slaves and stocks, hosting elaborate feasts and entertainment, etc., he admits: "my heart was pleased because of all my labor..." (2:10). Yet, as he faces all the works of his labor, he echoes his laments in the introduction (1:14): "all was vanity and striving after wind," with an additional comment: "and there was no profit under the sun" (2:11). However, no reason is given for his conclusion, nor any comment made concerning his intention of seeing goodness in life. But toward the end of this sub-section, the key word "do" is replaced by "labor" (2:10), which has strongly negative connotations beyond just work, activity or effort, for it refers to one's struggles in life.[114] The word thus serves as a hinge to the corresponding sub-section B', in which it is much repeated, and the reasons for his conclusion, and comments concerning his intention of seeing goodness are found. *(B-Worksheet #2h)*

The key word "labor" for sub-section B' (2:18-23) appears 10 times in six verses. Another important repetition is the 3-fold conclusion: "This too is vanity" (2:19,21,23), with an additional comment "and a great evil" attached to verse 21. Three reasons are given for his conclusions in both sub-sections B and B'. First, the fruit of his labor will be passed on to another, not knowing if the person is wise or foolish (2:18). Second, the portion that one gains with wisdom, knowledge and skill from one's labor will be given to another who has not labored for it (2:20). Third, the laborer gains nothing, for all his preoccupation in life results in pains and grief, so that his heart cannot rest at night (2:22-23). This sub-section B' is therefore a contrast to B in that the original intention for the heart to see "goodness" from pleasure and work only results in seeing "great evil," with pains and grief from one's striving and labor throughout life!

Framed in the middle of the chiastic structure is the sub-section C on the investigation of wisdom and folly (2:12-17) introduced in 1:16-18. As noted by Seow, this is a pivot sub-section that is hinged to the previous sub-section B by the verb "turn" in verses 11 about turning to see all his works and labors, and in verse 12 about turning to see wisdom and folly.[115] The investigation

[114] Ibid., 104.
[115] Ibid., 155.

on the latter yields two observations: first, wisdom excels folly as light does darkness (2:13-14a); and second, one fate befalls both, which is death (2:14b-16). Since both the wise and the fool will die and will be forgotten, the effort in obtaining wisdom ends only in futility and striving after wind (2:16-17). This pivot sub-section C is also hinged to the following sub-section B' by the verb "hate," in verses 17 about hating life itself due to the inevitable reality of death, and in verse 18 about hating all the labors because of the uncontrollable succession issue as a result of death. *(B-Worksheet #2j)*

In other words, Qoheleth's reflection on wisdom ends in frustration due to the reality of death, with its subsequent effect of bringing about uncertainties in life. And this realization affects also his deliberation on work, such that the term "do" and the comment that his heart was pleased because of all his labor (2:10) in sub-section B is changed respectively to the term "labor" and the comment that he hates all his labor (2:18) in sub-section B' Yet paradoxically, when this conclusion about death is reached, it is followed by his affirmation of life at the end: "Humans can do nothing better than to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in their labor. This also, I see, is from the hand of God" (2:24). It seems as if only when all pursuits are evaluated in the light of death can one really begin to accept life as a gift, with all its limitations and uncertainties

Contexts

The sample passage functions on various levels as a part of larger contexts of the book of Ecclesiastes: the wisdom corpus (Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes) and other wisdom writings scattered throughout the whole Bible, e g the historical books, the wisdom psalms, the prophetic books, the gospels and the ancient Near Eastern wisdom literature. Due to its broad coverage, which makes meaningful discussion in this chapter unlikely, the following discussion on literary context will cover the more immediate contexts of the book itself and of the wisdom corpus. Discussion on the historical context will briefly trace the historical development of the wisdom corpus, with special attention given to the Persian period that provides the background for the book of Ecclesiastes.

Literary   The structures and contents of the book of Ecclesiastes and those of the

wisdom corpus, with special focus on the wisdom theme within each, and how the sample passage functions in light of them are the focus of this section.

A.   In the context of Ecclesiastes: as noted by many scholars, the book may be divided into two parts due to the observation that 6:10 is in the midpoint of the book, with the first half (1:2-6:9) marked by eight occurrences of "a striving after wind" (1:14; 1:17; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26; 4:4; 4:16; 6:9), which is absent from the second half (6:10-12:14).[116] Seow finds support for such a division from the Masoretic note on 6:10 as the midpoint of the book, and from scholars who have observed that each half contains 111 out of 222 verses for the whole book.[117] Therefore, in Seow's demarcation of the book, apart from the prologue (1:1) and the epilogue (12:9-14), he has two main parts consisting of 13 sub-sections.[118] A close examination of his 13 sub-sections reflects that a chiastic literary structure is possible, as shown below:

A   Poem on Nature and Toil (1:2-11)

B   Futility of Human Pursuits (1:12-2:26)

C   God's Appointed Time and Activity (3:1-22)

D   The Toils of Living (4:1-16)

E   Fear God in His Awesome Presence (5:1-7)

F   Elusive Wealth and Longevity (5:8-6:9)

G   Who Knows What is Good? (6:10-7:14)

F'   Elusive Righteousness and Wisdom (7:15-29)

E'   Fear God in an Unpredictable World (8:1-17)

D'   The Advantages of Living (9:1-10)

C'   Human's Chance and Uncertainties (9:11-10:15)

B'   Necessity of Human Responsibilities (10:16-11:6)

A'   Poem on Youth and Old Age (11:7-12:8)

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[116] Ceresko, 96; Seow, 45.
[117] Seow, 45.
[118] Seow identifies 13 sub-sections in 1:2-12:8, but not a chiastic structure. 45-47.

The main body of the book is framed by the expression "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity!" in its first verse (1:2) and in its last (12:8), which, along with the introductory poem on nature and toil and the closing poem on youth and old age, provide the framework for the interpretation of the book. In the first poem, the movement in nature is represented by the sun, the wind and the water (1:5-7a) mechanically cycling and returning to the same place where they start all over again. Echoing this observation on nature is his closing poem on youth and old age, which describes the inevitable aging and passing of humans, with the dust returning to the earth from which it came, and the spirit to God who gave it. Therefore, the poem ends (12:8) with the same vanity statement that the first poem begins (1:2). Framed within these two poems in the rest of the book is Qoheleth's observation and reflection on the many aspects of human life in the face of death, which have led him to this unsettling conclusion that all human endeavors are vanity and striving of the wind. The following discussion will focus on sub-sections most relevant to the sample passage (B), namely, its corresponding sub-section B' and the center sub-section G. The others will be briefly summarized in pairs of corresponding sub-sections.

The sample passage B (1:12-2:26) demonstrates how the greatest and wisest king Solomon of Jerusalem, having conducted a thorough investigation of all human endeavors, comes to the conclusion that all human pursuits, including pleasure, wealth, achievements, even wisdom, are but vanity and striving after wind, due to the inevitability of death and the uncertainties it imposes on life. As such, sub-section B tops all other sub-sections in the frequency of appearance of the vanity statement: "striving after wind" occurring five times out of eight, and "vanity" occurring nine times out of 38 for the whole book. *(B-Worksheet #2k)*

In contrast to B, the corresponding sub-section B' (10:16-11:6) has no vanity statement, but describes how to live responsibly, precisely because of life's uncertainties. The first half (10:16-20), consisting of a few key words as its counterpart B, such as "king" (10:16, 17, 20; cf. 1:12, 2:12), "laughter," "wine" and "pleasure" (10:19, cf. 2:1-3), tells how people should consider themselves blessed if their king and princes conduct themselves responsibly by eating for strength, and drinking for pleasure and not for drunkenness. But it warns against criticizing the

king behind his back, considering the uncertainties involved when caught. The second half (11:1-6) encourages diligent work and sensible investments, precisely because of life's uncertainties. Even though the term "wisdom" is not used, this advice implies common sense for living a good or at least an undisturbed life; hence "wisdom" in the traditional sense. In other words, Qoheleth may be qualifying what he has said in sub-section B that all human pursuits are vanity and striving after wind in the face of life's uncertainties, by affirming that responsible human effort is still necessary because of these uncertainties.

Another sub-section that relates closely to B is the center sub-section G (6:10-7:14), as indicated by a key word and a reference that appear in both sub-sections: "good" *tob* and the straightening out of the crooked respectively. As discussed under structure and content of the sample passage above, Qoheleth's intention for his investigation on work and wisdom is to see goodness in life, but he ends up seeing "great evil" instead. The key word "good" *tob* is most frequently repeated in G than in any other sub-sections of the whole book. It appears in a series of "better-sayings" *tob-sayings* composed in the proverbial style of conventional wisdom, which aims at teaching what is "good" for humanity.[119] *(B-Worksheet #20)*

However, the series is framed by an introduction that denies humans of the ability to contend with someone stronger (implying God) and to really know what is good (6:10-12); and by a conclusion that denies anyone of the ability to straighten what God has made crooked, and of knowing what is going to happen (7:13-14).[120] Therefore, as Seow proposes, while containing an element of truth, these "better-sayings," with the word *tob* "good" appearing nine times, must be seen as an illustration of Qoheleth's reference to the "many words" of the wise, who claim to know what is good for humanity, but the sum total of which is nothing more than "vanity," or just empty talk (6:11)![121] Another important connection this center sub-section has with the sample passage is the allusion that what God has made crooked cannot be straightened by humans (7:13;

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[119] Seow, 242.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid, 243.

cf. 1:15), implying that the latter have no control over what is really good for humanity. Therefore, since humans do not really know, nor have any control over what is good for them, instead of engaging in such empty talks of what is good, Qoheleth proposes in his joy statement that there is nothing better than to rejoice in eating and drinking and in one's work as from the hand of God, which also appears at the end of B (2:24).

As Seow points out, Qoheleth may have Job in mind, who contended with God and insisted that He had perverted justice (Job 19:6-7); and by so doing, he engaged in vain talk, multiplying words without knowledge (Job 35:16).[122] Seow's observation is probably right, as confirmed by God's response from the whirlwind: "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 38:1-2) and "Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty?" and by Job's admission of ignorance as seen in his acceptance of God's judgment and in his humble repentance (Job 42:1-6). Similar to Job, Qoheleth acknowledges that the world is not perfect, and that God is responsible. But unlike Job, he realizes that humans cannot contend with God, so they must take things as they come, accepting both the good and the bad as coming from the hand of God, which is part of the divine mystery.

In sub-sections C (3:1-22) and its corresponding C' (9:11-10:15), the key word "time" in the poem on God's appointed time also appears three times in C', and the fact that humans do not know and have no control over what is happening to them is a key concept in both sub-sections. But while C emphasizes that all things happen and are made beautiful in God's appointed time, C' emphasizes on chance and uncertainties in life, such as the race not to the swift, nor bread to the wise, slaves riding on horses and princes walking on foot, evil times falling on humans suddenly, etc. The sub-sections D (4:1-16) and D' (9:1-10) presents a dilemma. In D, Qoheleth finds life filled with toils, with their related risks such as rivalry and envy, loss of peace and contentment, and isolation from kinsfolk and associates, so much so that death is a better option than living in some cases. But in D' he emphasizes the definite advantage of the living over the

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[122] Ibid, 242, 251.

dead, since the latter have no hope, no knowledge, no reward or remembrance, and in the place where they are going, there is no activity, no planning and no wisdom. Therefore, even "a live dog is better than a dead lion." So life is a dilemma: it is filled with toils, yet it is better than death! Sub-sections E (5:1-7) and E' (8:1-17) share in common the expression "fear God" and the advices on how to behave in the presence of one who has absolute power and authority, referring to God and to the king respectively. In E, fearing God refers to coming to His presence by saying few words and not making hasty vows that cannot be paid later. In E', it refers to anticipating His final judgment despite the apparent arbitrariness of the world that reflects injustices, such as the reversal of retribution for the righteous and the wicked. Finally, in the two sub-sections F (5:8-6:9) and F' (7:15-29), the value of traditional wisdom is seen to be elusive. The wealthy may not be content with their riches, or be able to sleep well, enjoy good health and appetite, and they must leave this world empty-handed just as the way they have come. Those who live long and have many children may not be able to enjoy good lives or have proper burials. The righteous may not enjoy longevity, or may even die in their righteousness; and as a matter of fact, there is really no one who is always good and never sins! Similarly, the wise may bring about their own destruction, and wisdom is so profound that no one can really discover it! *(B-Worksheet #2m)*

Therefore, all the uncertainties related to living in an arbitrary and oppressive world, the inevitability of death overshadowing all human activities, and the many unanswered questions about traditional wisdom and values have led Qoheleth to the unsettling conclusion that all human pursuits are vanity and striving after wind. On the other hand, seven times throughout the book, Qoheleth exhorts his readers to accept and rejoice in life's goodness (2:24; 3:12-13; 3:22; 5:18-19; 8:15; 9:7,9; 11:9), which comes from eating and drinking, the intimate association of family and friends, and human labor.[23] However, as Ceresko notes, while the reference to God's gifts and the fact that He gives are constant themes of the book, it appears to be purely arbitrary as to who receives and who does not (6:1-2).[24] Since the divine gift may or may not come, and when it

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[23] Perdue, 242.
[24] Ceresko, 98.

does, it may pass away quickly, the advice is, therefore, "seize the day!"[125] *(B-Worksheet #2n)*

In terms of its wisdom theme, not only is wisdom not worth pursuing in light of the reality of death, the larger context of the book also brings out its inaccessibility due to human's ignorance and inability to penetrate the divine plan, as Qoheleth confesses: "I tested all this with wisdom...but it was far from me...Who can discover it?" (7:23-24) and "...though the wise should say, 'I know,' he cannot discover" (8:17). In addition, the fear of the Lord is no longer found in direct association with wisdom, although the expression "fear God" does occur in a number of places (3:14, 5:7, 7:18, 8:12 and 12:13). In the only context in which wisdom is mentioned, he warns against being overly wise and righteous or excessively foolish and wicked, although he assures that fearing God will free them from being on either extreme that will bring about premature death (7:18). The concluding remark in the epilogue: "Fear God and keep His commandments," followed by "for God will bring every act to judgment...whether it is good or evil" (12:14) is given apart from the motivation to obtain wisdom, but seeks to bring his students into the presence of God who cannot be known, only acknowledged with awe and respect.

B.   In the context of the wisdom corpus: It is necessary to examine the structures and contents of the books of Proverbs and Job, so that clues to the wisdom theme and their impact on understanding the sample passage may be identified.

The Book of Proverbs can be divided into eight well-defined sections according to the titles given to each section as follows. *(B-Worksheet #2o)*

		Introduction	1:1-7	
1.	A	Lady Wisdom and Lady Folly	1:8-9:18	
2.	B	Solomonic Collection 1	10-22:16	
3.		Sayings of the Wise 1		22:17-24:22
4.		Sayings of the Wise 2		24:23-34
5.	B'	Solomonic Collection 2	25-29	

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[125] Perdue, 242.

6.		Sayings of Agur	30
7.		Sayings of Lemuel	31:1-9
8.	A'	Woman of Strength	31:10-31

The Introduction gives the motivation for studying the book as to acquire wisdom and understanding. The first section from 1:8 to 9:18 contrasts the way of wisdom with the way of folly, each personified as a woman. The discourses, with the repeated direct address: "my son" or "my sons," serve as an appeal from parents or teachers to youths confronting the choice of either pursuing Lady Wisdom or Lady Folly. Each of sections two and five consists of a Solomonic collection of wisdom sayings and followed by two sections of wisdom sayings of the wise. The book concludes with an acrostic poem in section eight, which describes the kind of life in the house of the Woman of Strength whose qualities a young man should seek in a wife.

The wisdom theme of the book is hidden in riddles, as McCreesh proposes, and as briefly summarized below.[126] The opening verse in the introduction, "the words of the wise and their riddles" (1:6) hints at the riddle quality of the sayings of the wise in the book, and it is climaxed at the end. As chapter 30 "the words of Agur" begins with a riddle (v4), so chapter 31 "the words of Lemuel" concludes with the riddle about the Woman of Strength. The riddle begins with an introductory question "A woman of strength, who can find?"[127] Having learned of her ways in the process of studying the book, the unraveling of this final riddle about her leads to the discovery of wisdom, personified as Lady Wisdom. This Lady Wisdom, in the first section of the book, searches for those who would listen to her word, and promises that they will dwell securely (1:33). Then in chapter 9, she invites them to enter the house that she has built (vv.1-6). Finally, when the time of courtship, or learning, is over, she is portrayed as a skilled mistress of her household—a practical, faithful guide, and lifelong companion for all who choose her way. Thus, the portrait of Lady Wisdom is completed by the Woman of Strength settled down with her own household, enjoying peace and security as promised in 1:33 and as portrayed in 31:10-31.

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[126] Thomas P. McCreesh, "Wisdom as Wife: Proverbs 31:10-31," Revue Biblique 92, no.1 (1985): 25-46.

[127] A literal translation by McCreesh in the article.

In Proverbs, the wisdom theme is closely related to the fear of the Lord, as expressed by "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction" (1:7, cf. 9:10). Since the expression appears in sections scholars regard as from an earliest period (7 times in 10-22:16) as well as those from a later period (6 times in ch. 1-9), it seems reasonable to concur with Perdue that Israel's concept of wisdom from its earliest stages is "a teaching grounded in the fear of God."[123]

The book of Job is framed by the prologue in chapters 1 to 2 and the epilogue in chapter 42:7-17. The main body may be demarcated into sections based on content or sub-genres. A close examination of these discourses reveals a chiastic structure as follows. *(B-Worksheet #2p)*

A	Prologue	1-2	
B	Job's Lament	3	
C	Friends' Disputation with Job	4-27	
D	Wisdom Hymn		28
D'	Job's Lament		29-31
C'	Elihu's Disputation Speeches	32-37	
B'	God's Challenge	38-42:6	
A'	Epilogue	42:7-17	

The prologue A begins with a presentation of Job as a sage of great wealth, moral virtue and faithfulness to God. It is then followed by a challenge posed by the satan whether Job will remain faithful to God if he loses all his blessings. Because of this challenge. Job is subjected to a series of crises by which his faith is tested. The epilogue A' presents the resolution that Job is faithful to the Lord at the end, despite all the sufferings he has been put through. The main body of the book (3-42:6) presents a series of disputation between Job and his friends and that between Job and God over the issue of Job's innocent suffering. B is an individual lament, with Job expressing the desire to die rather than to live, which is countered by God's speeches challenging

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[123] Perdue, 46.

Job with the goodness and mystery of His creation in B'. C consists of three cycles of disputation between Job and his three friends, which corresponds with a fourth person's disputation speeches, directed primarily against Job in C'. In the center D is a hymn of praise on Wisdom, along with Job's final speeches in the form of an individual lament directed to God in D'.

The wisdom theme in Job is most clearly addressed in the poem of the inaccessibility of wisdom (ch. 28). Placed alongside Job's second soliloquy (ch. 29-31), in which he searches for an answer to the cause of his suffering, the poem serves as a clue to the wisdom of innocent suffering. *(B-Worksheet #2q)*

The poem may be divided into three parts: each ending with the allusion to where wisdom can be found (vv. 12, 20 & 28). The first part contrasts the human effort in searching out the earth's treasures with the much more difficulty task of finding wisdom, as the refrain goes: "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?" The second part affirms the value of wisdom, and is climaxed by the same refrain with the additional note of its inaccessibility to humans. The third part acknowledges that as Creator of the universe, God alone holds the key to wisdom, which He reveals to humankind: "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (28:28).

Job's disputations with God and his friends are well summarized in his three-point soliloquy. First, God has caused good to befall him in the past (ch. 29). Second, God has caused evil to befall him in the present (ch. 30). Third, he has searched his heart and found himself blameless all along (ch. 31). Therefore, he ends his soliloquy by challenging God to charge him of any guilt that accounts for his suffering. As Merchert points out, while his friends argue backward from Job's suffering to the conclusion that he must have sinned, Job also argues backward from his innocent suffering to the conclusion that God must be unjust.[129] It is against this self-righteous arrogance and ignorance of his limitations as a creature that God speaks from the whirlwind, to declare his mastery over and commitment to his creation. Eventually Job

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[129] Melchert, 84.

confesses his ignorance, and gains a new knowledge of God through the granting of a vision, as he declares: "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees Thee" (42:5). Such an acknowledgement in the fear of the Lord demonstrates his acceptance of the mystery and freedom of God, which is wisdom, as affirmed by the wisdom poem (ch. 28). *(B-Worksheet #2r)*

In summary, wisdom as presented in Proverbs has a riddle-like quality, as seen in the question "A woman of strength, who can find?" (31:10) that introduces the final riddle, the unraveling of which leads to wisdom. The wisdom approach is by observing the order of nature and by listening to the collective experience of the wisdom tradition, so that by reading the ways of life in the fear of the Lord, one discovers the ways of God, and such wisdom leads to successes and blessings in daily living. In Job, the particular kind of wisdom sought after is that which gives clues to innocent suffering. Contrary to the confidence of traditional wisdom, the answer to the question, "Where can wisdom be found?" (28:12-20) is that wisdom is held by God alone. While the book affirms order and wisdom in the world, it also recognizes divine freedom and the mystery of life, which are not fully knowable to creatures.[130] In Ecclesiastes, the answer to the question "Who can discover it?" (7:24) is that no one can find wisdom, for there is no clue to it and there is no point discovery it, for death negates everything. But instead of disputing with God, Qoheleth accepts death and whatever little enjoyment life has to offer as one's portion arbitrarily granted by an unknowable God. Perhaps, this kind of "fear of the Lord" that affirms God as the sovereign Creator and final Judge is truly wisdom in the most profound sense. But this kind of affirmation comes from the most honest reflection on the reality of death and its impact upon life as demonstrated by Qoheleth. And the sample passage is a summary of that process.

Historical.   Ceresko recognizes three phases of the wisdom tradition of Israel as follows.[131] The first and earliest phase as reflected in parts of Proverbs is that of folk wisdom, which gives both practical advice and intellectual stimulus in the form of riddles, allegories,

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[130] Brueggemann. The Creative Word. 88.
[131] Ceresko. 25.

fables and other forms of poetic speech. The second phase, also reflected in parts of Proverbs and historical books that refer to kings and rulers, is that of royal wisdom, which sees the king as an exponent of wisdom (2 Sam 14:20b). The third phase, as seen in the longer didactic poems in Proverbs, leading to the shaping of the book as a whole, and in the books of Job and Ecclesiastes, occurs after the exile when Israel was compelled to re-think and redefine what it meant to be the people of God. The historical settings can be traced in the contents of these books. For example, the proverbial saying "He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but the person who pursues vain things lacks sense" (Prov 12:11) reflects both practical wisdom as well as an agrarian culture typical of pre-exilic Judah.[132] Royal wisdom can be identified in the references to court counselors offering advise to rulers (2 Sam 16:23) and to copiers and collectors of proverbs as "the officials of King Hezekiah of Judah" (Prov 25:1). Works of the post-exilic period is reflected in the theology of Job, and in the language and socioeconomic conditions of Ecclesiastes.

Many scholars date the book of Ecclesiastes to the 5th to 4th century of the Persian period, based on primarily linguistic and socioeconomic grounds.[133] In the sample passage alone, many terms reflect a monetary and commercial economy of that period, e.g. *yitron* advantage/profit, *hesron* deficit/what is lacking, *natan* grant, *amal* labor/toil, *kisron* success, etc.[134] The reference to the *natan* grant (Ecc 2:24) has the Persian royal grant and the monetary and commercial economy as a backdrop as summarized below.[135] The royal grant was a system of property grant instituted by the Persian ruler, given arbitrarily to favored individuals and relatives, who were then to collect taxes on the property while retaining a portion of the revenues to themselves. Recipients of the grant may divide the property and sublet them to small holders, who in turn may rent out to tenant farmers and workers and collect taxes from them, and they in turn paid those above them, and so forth. Through this elaborate system of land grant, the Persians rulers were able to control and exploit the provinces, and the grant recipients in turn exploited those under

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[132] Seow, 23.
[133] Ibid., 20; Crenshaw, 31.
[134] Seow, 22.
[135] Ibid., 23, 26.

them. But on the other hand, there was also the potential for people to climb the socioeconomic ladder. So Qoheleth speaks of injustices and oppressions in the land: "If you see oppression of the poor and denial of justice and righteousness in the province, do not be shocked at the sight, for one official watches over another official, and there are higher officials over them..." (5:8). In Qoheleth's concept, the divine King is just as arbitrary as the Persian ruler: to those whom He favors are given wisdom, knowledge and joy; but to those not favored, the task of collecting and gathering for others to enjoy (2:24-26).[136] Therefore, when a person receives a portion from God, however imperfect that may be, one better makes the most of it, because, just like the royal grant that was not automatically transferable upon death, one can only enjoy it while alive.[137]

When Israel, though restored to her homeland, was under foreign rule, the experience was somewhat equivalent to that of a national death. Conventional wisdom was not only challenged; its search even seemed futile or irrelevant. In such a setting, the sample passage may serve to critique the vain pursuits of wealth, success, and wisdom in the face of uncertainties, social instability and death. On the other hand, it may also serve to encourage its audience to enjoy the fruits of their labor as a portion given by God who alone is in control. *(B-Worksheet #2s)*

The message also speaks to the New Testament Christians in a way similar to Jesus' parable of the rich fool (Lk 12:16-21). While the rich fool said, "I will tear down my barns and build larger ones...and I will say to my soul, '...you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry,'" God said to him, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?" And Jesus concludes, "so is the one who lays up treasure for oneself, and is not rich toward God" (Lk 12:21*).

Theological Theme and Message *(B-Worksheet #2t)*

An honest reflection on the inevitable reality of death and its impact on life reveals that all earthly pursuits are futile; but that it is best to enjoy the fruit of one's labor in the context of human relationships as a portion from God's hand for this life time.

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[136] Ibid. 25.
[137] Ibid. 24.

Prophetic

Prophetic literature does not distinguish between the "original" words of the prophets and the writings of later redactors, even when there is a clear evidence of such redactions; rather, it is presented in the final form of the prophetic book as from the hand of the original prophet, with all its messages in totality laying claim to religious authority, as demonstrated in the book of Isaiah.[138] Appearing at the beginning of a prophetic book, the superscription usually includes its author, date and subject; and identifies the book as the "words" (Jer 1:1; Amos 1:1), "vision" (Isa 1:1; Nah 1:1), "pronouncement" (Hab 1:1; Mal 1:1), or "book" (Nah 1:1) of the prophet, but most frequently as "the word of the Lord" that came to the prophet (Ezek 1: 1-3; Mal 1:1).[139]

One of the difficulties in interpreting prophecies is the lack of clear divisions between individual sayings within a collection of oracles that may very well address different audiences and different situations.[140] It is therefore crucial to demarcate and interpret the individual units before running them together into whole sections.[141] Familiarity with the language of the various sub-genres certainly helps to demarcate as well as to interpret the units. The relationship and connection between the various units may be identified from the repetitive use of key words, key phrases, imageries, and even sub-genres. Another major clue to interpretation is the historical background of the individual units, which may be found in historical books and other prophetic books of the same period. Consulting some good commentaries is also essential, not only because they make references to other writings within the Bible, they also provide information on significant events of the period from sources other than the Bible.

The sample passage selected for this study is Isaiah 5, because it provides a good illustration for the study of sub-genres, prophetic images, connections to other passages, etc., and also due to the significance of the book of Isaiah for the study of prophetic literature, and the

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[138] Marvin A. Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39: With an Introduction to Prophetic Literature, ed. Rolf P. Knierim and Gene M. Tucker. Forms of the Old Testament Literature, vol. 16 (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1996), 11-12.

[139] Ibid., 16.

[140] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth: A Guide for Understanding the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 158-59.

[141] Osborne, 217.

relevance of its message to the Chinese American Christians. The following section on literary characteristics focuses primarily on sub-genres and imageries. The next section on contexts will cover both the literary and the historical. But due to the importance of historical background for interpreting the individual sayings, a couple of significant events relevant to the sample passage in its immediate context will be presented before discussing its literary contexts. Then, historical contexts in terms of how the sample passage may address the needs of its readers in the exilic, postexilic and the contemporary New Testament communities will be analyzed. As a result of these analyses, the theological theme and message of the sample passage will be identified.

Literary Characteristics

Prophetic literature employs a variety of sub-genres typical of its own, such as the judgment speech, salvation oracle, vision report, etc. plus a number of others adapted from other genres, such as the instruction and exhortation from wisdom literature.[142] The following are some of the sub-genres most commonly found in prophetic literature.

Judgment Speech. As Westermann points out, of the three major components of prophetic books: narrative accounts, prayer and prophetic speech, the most common form is the prophetic speech, of which the announcement of judgment is recognized as the most basic and frequent form.[143] In this form, the prophet speaks on behalf of the Lord to announce disaster to individuals, to Israel or to foreign nations, and it includes the reason for judgment or accusation of sin, a logical connective, "because" or "therefore," and the announcement of judgment.[144]

Judgment speeches to individuals can be found in the historical books as well as in prophetic books. An example of the former is seen in the prophet Samuel's words of accusation against Saul, "you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God," followed by the announcement of judgment, "now your kingdom shall not endure. The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and...has appointed him as ruler over His people..." (1 Sam

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[142] Ibid., 28-29.
[143] Claus Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech, trans. Hugh Clayton White (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1967), 90, 26.
[144] Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39, 23.

13:13-14). An example that appears in both historical and prophetic books is Isaiah's implied accusation of Hezekiah for showing off all his treasures to representatives from Babylon, hence resulting in the Lord's judgment, "Hear the word of the Lord of hosts, 'Behold, the days are coming when all that is in your house, and all that your fathers have laid up in store to this day shall be carried to Babylon...' says the Lord. 'And some of your sons...shall be taken away...'" (Isa 39:3-7 and 2 Kgs 20:14-18). *(B-Worksheet #3a)*

Judgment speeches to Israel are directed to the nation as a whole, to some groups within the nation, or to members of the body politic; and the length of time between the concrete sin and the prophet's accusation, and that between the prophet's announcement of judgment and its fulfillment are greater than those of judgment speeches against individuals.[145] Most of the time, a messenger formula, "therefore, thus says Yahweh" or the abbreviated, "therefore," is found after the accusation or reason, and before the announcement of judgment, which involves God's intervention and the results of that intervention.[146] An example is found in the Lord's word to Isaiah against Judah, "Inasmuch as these people have rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah, and rejoice in Rezin...now therefore, behold, the Lord is about to bring on them the strong and abundant waters of the Euphrates, even the king of Assyria...then it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass through..." (Isa 8:5-8). By means of a metaphor of rejecting their own limited water supply of Jerusalem for the abundant supply of the Euphrates that flow through the Assyrian capital, the prophet Isaiah accused the people of their sin in appealing to Assyria for help, and thus brought about the Lord's judgment of allowing Assyria to attack Judah as well.[147] *(B-Worksheet #3b)*

Addressed to Israel or Judah but directed against foreign nations, judgment speeches usually appear in series (Isa 13-23, Jer 46-51, Ezek 25-32), though sometimes also individually (Isa 10:5-34), and present their destruction as an act of Yahweh.[148] Thus, they can be regarded as

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[145] Westermann. *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech.* 169-70.
[146] Ibid. 171.
[147] R. E. Clements. *Isaiah 1-39.* ed. Ronald E. Clements and Matthew Black. New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing. 1980). 96-97.
[148] Sweeney. *Isaiah 1-39.* 528

salvation speeches for Israel, as clearly seen in the judgment speech against Assyria, "I send it against a godless nation...to capture booty and to seize plunder... Yet it does not so intend...it is its purpose to destroy... So...I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria..." (10:6-12). The prophetic word then assures Judah that when that happens, "his burden will be removed...his yoke from your neck" (10:27). *(B-Worksheet #3c)*

Woe Oracle. Usually found in series, the cry of woe is a variant form of the judgment speech, which consists of two parts: beginning with "Woe," the first part introduces the accusation; and the second announces the judgment.[149] The woe is usually directed to those accused of having just done something wrong specifically, e.g. "those who add house to house and join field to field, until there is no more room" (Isa 5:8), which is followed by an announcement of the coming doom, e.g. "Surely, many houses shall become desolate, even great and fine ones, without occupants" (Isa 5:9).[150] *(B-Worksheet #3d)*

Salvation Speech. The word "salvation" refers to "an act of deliverance" or "a state of well-being;" thus, the salvation speech takes two forms that constitute God's saving activity: first, a proclamation of blessing following a situation of deliverance; and second, a proclamation of restoration to a state of well-being after the collapse of 587 B.C.[151] While the former is basically an announcement of deliverance from a present threat or danger, sometimes accompanied by a sign; the latter, often introduced by the formula, "In that day," is a promise of future salvation or restoration following judgment, which requires God's activity on Israel's behalf for their well-being.[152]

An example of the first type is seen in Isaiah's promise of deliverance to Ahaz, "'Take care, and be calm, have no fear and do not be fainthearted...because Aram, with Ephraim...has planned evil against you...' thus says the Lord. 'It shall not stand nor shall it come to pass...'" accompanied by a sign (Isa 7:1-17). The second type proclaims in two parts salvation or

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[149] Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech. 190-91.
[150] Ibid. 192-93.
[151] Claus Westermann. Prophetic Oracles of Salvation in the Old Testament. trans. Keith Crim (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press. 1991). 16.
[152] Ibid. 72-73.

liberation after judgment has taken place: God turning again to his people, expressed explicitly or implicitly; and God restoring them, with the result of their returning home or renewing the state of well-being.[152] An example of this type may be found in 11:11-16, in which the Lord is described as coming to gather Israel and Judah from the four corners of the earth, and restore them to well-being, and they will come up through a highway from Assyria, just as in the days of the exodus. *(B-Worksheet #3e)*

In Deutero-Isaiah (40-55), the speech takes on a new form with three parts: the call of reassurance, "Do not fear;" the basis of reassurance, "for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine;" and the future-oriented basis of the reassurance, which is identical with the proclamation of salvation, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you... When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you" (Isa 43:1-7).[153] In terms of content and theology, Deutero-Isaiah's salvation speech takes on a universalistic outlook, in that the destruction of other peoples is no longer a condition for Israel's salvation, and the regaining of political power is no longer a part of the salvation message for Israel, as affirmed by the absence of judgment oracles against the Persian Empire.[155] *(B-Worksheet #3f)*

Announcement of a Royal Savior. It is a special form of the salvation speech, the constituents of which may include a description of chaos in the land, an announcement of the coming of a just and righteous king as a part of the new period of salvation, a listing of his names, and a description of the characteristics of his rule.[156] *(B-Worksheet #3g)*

An example may be found in Isaiah 9:2-7, which begins with a description of a long period of darkness and oppression (vv.2-5), followed by an announcement of the birth of a royal child and his names (v.6), and concluded with a description of his eternal rule in peace, justice and righteousness, and an affirmation of the oracle being the Lord's proclamation (v.7).

Trial Oracle. Related to the legal procedure in the context of the law court, it takes the

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[152] Ibid. 73.
[154] Ibid. 42.
[155] Ibid. 66.
[156] Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39. 514.

form of the "covenant lawsuit," typically referring to a legal case brought by the Lord against Israel for violating the terms of the covenant between them.[157] Characteristic elements include a summons for witnesses, which may be heaven and earth as impartial witnesses (Isa 1:2a); identification of the accuser and the defendant (1:2b); an accusation (1:2b-9), often accompanied by rhetorical questions (1:5 and 12); an appeal for a legal proceeding (1:18-20); and an announcement of verdict, which is replaced by admonitions for proper behavior in Isaiah 1 (1:10-17). *(B-Worksheet #3h)*

The Song of the Vineyard in the sample passage of Isaiah 5 consists of all the important elements of a trial oracle or covenant lawsuit. First, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah are summoned to be the witnesses (v.3). Second, the Accuser and Owner of the vineyard brings a case against the defendant Israel, His vineyard (v.3 and 7a). Third, the accusation is that it produces wild grapes instead of good ones despite the great care lavished on it by its Owner (v.2), which is explained as the people's failure in meeting the expectation of the Lord by producing violence and oppression instead of justice and righteousness (v.7b). Fourth, the accusation is accompanied by a couple of rhetorical questions: "What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones?" (v.4), which give evidence that the Lord has fulfilled His part of the covenant. Finally, the verdict is announced that He is going to remove its hedges, break down its wall, lay it waste and withdraw rain on it, so that it will become a trampled ground that produces briars and thorns (vv.5-6).

Disputation. In prophetic books, disputation occurs as a result of differences of opinion between the prophet and his contemporary opponents.[158] But most of the examples present only the prophet's speech, with the opponents' view simply quoted, and the disputation aims at persuading his opponents to abandon their position and adopt that of his own.[159] Murray

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[157] Ibid.

[158] Gunkel, in Einleitungen, in Schmidt. Die grossen Propheten. xi-lxxii. Cited by Graffy. 2.

[159] Sweeney. Isaiah 1-39. 519.

proposes three elements as constituting the disputation speech: the thesis, the counter-thesis, and the dispute.[160] How the three elements work in a prophetic disputation may be seen in Murray's illustrations from Isaiah 49:14-21 and 10:5-15, as summarized in the following.[161]

In the 49:14-21 passage, the thesis is the people's conviction of complete rejection by the Lord (v.14), and it is disputed by a strong emotional appeal that if it is hardly conceivable that a woman should forget her baby, much less can the Lord forget them (v.15). Then the prophet's own counter-thesis is that far from being forgotten and abandoned, Zion has been constantly before the Lord who is about to rebuild and repopulate her ruins (vv.16-21). (B-Worksheet #3j)

In the 10:5-14 passage, the thesis, implied in verse 5 and clearly enunciated in verse 6, is the Lord's position that Assyria is His instrument of punishment against the nations. The counter-thesis, given negatively as contrary to the thesis in verse 7a, and then positively in the quotation of the opponent's own words in verse 7b, is Assyria's desire to destroy the nations at will. The dispute, beginning characteristically with rhetorical questions of Assyrian boasting of their power, followed by the Lord's plan to punish her (vv.8-11), is both a refutation of Assyria's counter-thesis, and a justification of the Lord's thesis.

Vocation Account.   It is the initiatory commission and authentication of the prophet as a spokesperson for the Lord, which may be described in an autobiographical form, as in the cases of Isaiah (Isa 6), Jeremiah (Jer 1) and Ezekiel (Eze 1), or in the narrative form as in the case of Moses (Exd 3).[162] Habel identifies six constituent elements for the genre: a divine confrontation; an introductory word; a commission; an objection by the prophet; a reassurance; and a sign.[163] (B-Worksheet #3k)

Vision Report.   It is usually given in an autobiographical form, recounting what a prophet sees or hears as an inner perception or as a private experience.[164] Long describes its three

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[160] Murray, 99.
[161] Ibid. 104-10.
[162] Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39. 542.
[163] N. Habel. "The Form and Significance of the Call Narratives." Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 77 (1965): 297-323. Cited by Sweeney. Isaiah 1-39. 542.
[164] Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39. 18.

elements as follows: an announcement of the vision stating what the prophet "saw" or "was made to see;" a transition to the vision indicated by "and behold;" and the vision itself, usually beginning with one or more visual images followed by scenes, sounds, voices, dialogues, and movements that explain the significance of the vision.[165] For the prophet Isaiah, his vocation account in Isaiah 6 can also be classified as a vision report, since the account depicts a vision of the Lord in heaven, with all the typical elements as described above. *(B-Worksheet #3l)*

Image Cluster. Parker identifies four image clusters used over and over again in the prophetic books to convey the divine-human drama, as summarized below.[166] The image clusters include sexual relationships, animals, the vineyard and the drinking of wine, which are used to describe essentially the same drama played out in four acts. Act I tells of the establishment of a covenant between God and his people; Act II describes the covenant being broken due to the people's rebellion, because of which they are punished in Act III; and Act IV envisions God restoring them to life and relationship with him. In the imagery of sexual relationships as seen in the book of Hosea, God takes his people as his beloved bride, but she turns harlot and is humiliated by her lovers before being restored again as God's wife. In the imagery of animals, God's people are his domesticated animals, but they turn wild and are left to be ravaged by wild animals, until they are rescued by their master and return to his care. In the imagery of the vineyard, God's people are a vineyard He plants and tends, but grows wild and are abandoned by God until He makes them fruitful again. In the imagery of the drinking of wine, God's people enjoy the good wine provided by Him, but misuses it and become drunk, so they must drink the cup of God's wrath, until He gives them new wine to enjoy again. But as Parker also points out, the prophet rarely describes the entire four-act drama with a single image cluster in one oracle, but mixes and matches images from different clusters to tell any one or more of the four acts in a seemingly haphazard way. *(B-Worksheet #3m)*

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[165] B. O. Long, "Reports of Visions Among the Prophets," Journal of Biblical Literature 95 (1976): 353–65. Cited by Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39, 18, 542

[166] Margaret Parker, "Exploring Four Persistent Prophetic Images," Bible Review 6 (Oct. 1990): 38–45.

Applying Parker's imagery, an example of the mixing and matching of imagery clusters may be found in the sample passage, although the primary image cluster is that of the vineyard. Act I (1-2a) begins with Israel being God's beloved vineyard, which He plants and tends with care. The hewing out of a wine vat switches to the wine drinking imagery, anticipating good wine from the vineyard. The prophet then describes Act II (2b) in the image cluster of the vineyard again by portraying the people as producing worthless grapes instead of good grapes. Act III (5-6) is played out in the same image cluster, with God removing its hedge, breaking down its wall and laying it waste, resulting in the growth of briars and thorns. Act IV is left untold, but in the woe oracles, the prophet revisits Act II with a different image cluster of God's people becoming drunk, not paying attention to the work of his hands (vv. 11-12) and suppressing justice (vv. 22-23). And he replays Act III in the vineyard imagery of it becoming unproductive due to its abandonment (v. 10); and in the animal imagery of lambs grazing in the pasture of their waste land (v. 17). At the end of the chapter, the prophet again makes use of the image cluster of animals for Act III by portraying the enemy the Lord raises up against his people as coming in horses and roaring like a lioness seizing her prey (vv. 26-30). Thus, these image clusters help to identify and interpret the drama of the divine-human covenant relationship that is a dominant theme in prophetic messages.

Structure and Content. Being primarily a judgment speech, the sample passage is distinctly separated from the salvation speech of chapter 4 and the narrative vocation account of the prophet Isaiah in chapter 6. Within chapter 5 itself, three divisions may be identified: first, the Song of the Vineyard (5:1-7); second, two series of woe oracle accusing Israel of her sins and announcing the Lord's judgment (5:8-24); and third, the concrete description of a military attack (5:25-30) as a further punishment of Israel's sin accused of in the second division, and as a consequence of the vineyard being left as a trampled ground open to predators in the first division.

As already illustrated in the previous section under Trial Oracle and Image Cluster, the Vineyard Song of the first division tells of the utter disappointment that the owner has when the

vineyard produces wild grapes instead of good grapes, despite the great care he has lavished upon it. In the same way, the Lord is utterly disappointed with His people after He has nurtured and patiently waited for justice and righteousness, but finds instead, violence and oppression (5:7). As the owner of the vineyard removes its hedges and its wall and withdraws his care, leaving it a trampled ground open to predators (5:5-6, cf. 5:9-10, 17), the Lord's anger burns against His people, and stretches out His hand to strike them down by signaling a military attack on them as described in the last division (5:25-30).[167] The middle division deals with the Lord's indictment as expressed by a couple of woe series (5:8-17; 5:18-24), with the typical form of accusation of evil deeds (vv.8-12; 18-23) beginning with "Woe," and followed by His announcement of judgment that fits their crime (vv.13-17; 24 respectively), beginning with "therefore" (vv.13, 14 and 24).

Two conditions are condemned in the first woe series. First, joining house to house and field to field implies the violation of the Torah that protects family property from being sold perpetually (Lev 25:23-28), resulting in the rich disposing their poor neighbors by absorbing their properties (v.8). Because of their exploitation, the Lord of hosts swears that many houses shall become desolate, and their vineyard unproductive (vv.9-10), apparently due to abandonment in times of wars or exile. Second, pursuing pleasure all day long, partying and giving way to strong drinks, resulting in the failure to "see" the "work" of His hand (vv.11-12) refers to the luxurious lifestyle of the upper class.[168] Beginning with "therefore" in verses 13 and 14, two punishments are specified. The first is the exile, with the root cause identified as "the lack of knowledge" (v.13) which, in this context means ignoring the Torah and being insensitive to the Lord's work. The second is the death of her nobility and multitude, as expressed by the imagery of Sheol opening the mouth to consume them (vv.13 and 14). While the first punishment is specified along with its cause, the second includes its consequences as intended by the Lord, which is that the

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[167] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39: a New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary. ed. William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman. Anchor Bible Commentary. vol. 19 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 208.

[168] Clements. Isaiah 1-39, 63.

exalted ones (the proud) will be humbled, but that the Lord of hosts will be exalted in judgment and in righteousness (vv. 15-16). The proud in this context would be those who ignore His law and His works. That the Lord be exalted in "justice" and "righteousness" is clearly demonstrated in the following verse (v. 17), which alludes to lambs grazing in and strangers eating from the abandoned pastures of the wealthy, in that the exploiters who have disposed their poor neighbors (v. 8) are now gone from the property of their arduous pursuit, and are themselves disposed by animals and strangers. Verse 16 may also refer back to the Song of the Vineyard, as "justice" and "righteousness" are the very two characteristics the Lord intends to see in His children who are to take on His nature, but finds instead, violence and oppression (5:7). *(B-Worksheet #3n)*

The second woe series is directed against four types of sin. First, dragging iniquity with cords of falsehood (v. 18), calling in mocking fashion for God to speed up His "work" that people may "see" and "know" His purpose (vv. 18-19), refers back to those who are insensitive to God's working in the first woe series, as it reverses the prophet's accusation that they do not "see" the "work" of His hands (v. 12b) and their lacking in "knowledge" (v. 13). Second, reversing good and evil, darkness and light, bitter and sweet, etc. (v. 20) implies a perversion of truth, perhaps by refusing absolute authority, defying traditional norms, or justifying their own actions with sophisticated reasoning. Third, being wise in their own eyes (v. 21) is self-aggrandizing, which may refer to the problem of the royal counselor, the expert artisan and the skillful enchanter, who are often among the first to be stripped away in deportation (3:3). Finally, heroes of wine drinking (v. 22) who justify the wicked for a bribe and take away the righteousness of the righteous (v. 23) are those who play heroes in the wrong way by suppressing justice and righteousness for self-gain. Here again, justice and righteousness are the two characteristics that the Lord seeks in His people, but finds instead, violence and oppression, as alluded to in the Song of the Vineyard (5:7). Beginning with "therefore," the punishment as expressed in a nature metaphor is that their root becomes rotten and their blossom blown away, just as stubble and grass are consumed by fire (v. 24a). The connecting preposition "for" identifies the cause of their punishment as their rejection of the law of the Lord and their despising of His word (v. 24b), which is similar to that

given for the first woe series (v.13).

Just as the "lack of knowledge" leads the people to ignoring the law by exploiting the poor and becoming insensitivity to the Lord's work condemned in the first woe series, the "rejection of the law of the Lord and despising of His word" give way to their sins of falsehood, perversion of truth, self aggrandizing and suppression of justice and righteousness condemned in the second woe series. And as the lack of knowledge parallels the rejection of the law of the Lord and His word, the sins described in both series are also similar, and can be summarized as human arrogance (falsehood in mocking God, perversion of truth and self-aggrandizing) and the suppression of justice and righteousness. Drunkenness may not be a specific sin condemned, as both verses that refer to it identify the wicked conditions of not paying attention to the work of the Lord as a result of a luxurious lifestyle of the upper class (v.12) and of justifying the wicked and condemning the righteous for a bribe (v.22), both of which may or may not be directly caused by drunkenness. As illustrated in the previous section under image clusters, drunkenness is probably used to portray Act II of the divine-human drama, which refers to the sinful condition of the people, or their loosing sense of perception as in the state of drunkenness, to justify the punishment of being made to drink of the cup of the Lord's anger (v.25, cf. 51:17), which is Act III of the drama. *(B-Worksheet #3o)*

The last division (5:25-30) beginning with "therefore" as common to the second part of a judgment speech, affirms that it is the Lord's angry response to the wicked conditions expressed in the woe series that is responsible for their punishments, specified above as exile, death and consumption by fire (vv.13-14, 24a). His stretched out hand that strikes His people by means of an earthquake in verse 25, possibly referring to that during Uzziah's reign around 783-742 B.C.[169] (Amos 1:1), resulting in corpses lying in the middle of the street, has already happened as a punishment for their sins. Yet, the Lord's anger has not turned away, for His hand is still stretched out for more punishments to come. Therefore, the picture of an approaching army

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[169] Blenkinsopp, Isaiah 1-39, 218.

described in verses 26-30 fills out and gives content to the figure of the Lord's unabated anger and still outstretched hand. It predicts a concrete event of God's direct intervention in the historical process by raising up an army as the rod of His wrath to punish His people, as evident by the word "standard" or "signal" (5:26), indicating an act of divine summoning.[170] While not identified specifically, the descriptions of the military discipline and tactics seem to refer to the well-trained army of the Assyrians.[171] And it is this military attack of the Assyrians sent by the Lord that accounts for the destruction of land, people, and the exile.

In summary, four major concerns are covered in the sample passage: Israel's sin, its cause, its punishments and the end result of punishments. Her sin is seen as human arrogance and the suppression of justice and righteousness. Its cause is her lack of knowledge in terms of rejecting the Lord's law or word and ignoring the work of His hand. Exile and death brought about by natural disasters (e.g., famine and earthquake) and military attack (seen as His work, see historical context on 10:12 below) are the punishments for her sin. The end result of punishments is that the arrogant are humbled and the Lord exalted in justice and righteousness.

Contexts

Since the historical background of individual units is crucial to their interpretation, before dealing with the literary context of the sample passage, two major political events particularly important to the understanding of Isaiah 1-12 based on Clements' study[172] (unless otherwise noted) is summarized below.

Affecting the entire period of Isaiah's activity were military and political threats posed to Israel and Judah by the Assyrians. A major event that led to significant consequences for both Israel and Judah during Ahaz' reign was the Syro-Ephraimite Crisis. It extended from the time of Uzziah's death in 736 to 733 B.C., when Syria and Israel formed an alliance against Assyrian control and forced Judah into line by trying to dispose Ahaz and replace him with a "ben Tabeel"

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[170] Ronald E. Clements. Old Testament Prophecy: From Oracles to Canon (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 90.

[171] Clements, Isaiah 1-39, 70.

[172] Ibid., 9-10.

(Isa 7:6). Ahaz, who had just come to the throne in 736, appealed to Assyria for protection, but in the process invited brutal attack upon Israel and Syria, as the result of which Samaria was overthrown in 733 and Damascus in the following year. After 733, only a rump-state of Ephraim was left, and both Judah and Israel became vassals of Assyria. This led to further rebellion on the part of Ephraim-Israel, resulting in a siege of Samaria and the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C. Since then, Israel lost her identity as a political power and was administered as an internal province of the Assyrian empire. But the Southern Kingdom Judah, though a vassal-kingdom, retained her own native ruler.

The other major political event was the invasion by Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 B.C. during the reign of Hezekiah. Prior to this invasion, Judah was pressed into joining a widespread revolt led by the Philistines against Assyria in the years 713-711 B.C. According to Sweeney, the Lord's announcement of judgment in Isaiah 10 was directed toward Sargon II, in response to his threat to intimidate Judah from involvement in his conflict with the Philistines in 711 B.C.[173] Sennacherib, who came to the throne following Sargon's death in 705 B.C. was fully occupied in other parts of the realm, during which Hezekiah seized the opportunity to arm his kingdom by extensive building of fortifications (2 Chr 32:29-30). Hoping that Assyria would be too preoccupied to bother with the distant kingdom of Judah, Hezekiah attempted to withdraw allegiance to her. But this miscalculated judgment led to Sennacherib's attack in 701, resulting in the destruction of virtually every town and fortress in Judah except Jerusalem (1:8). According to Seitz, the Annals of Sennacherib speak of 46 walled towns and fortifications being destroyed, which is the remaining "work" of cleansing judgment referred to in 10:12, "So it will be that when the Lord has completed all His work…."[174] Then, Assyria was consumed in a single day by the righteous anger of the Lord, and Sennacherib was slain by his own sons while worshiping his god (10:17, 27, cf. 37:36-38).

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[173] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Sargon's Threat Against Jerusalem in Isaiah 10, 27-32," Biblica 75, no. 4 (1994): 457-70.

[174] Christopher R. Seitz, Isaiah 1-39, ed. James Luther Mays and Patrick D. Miller Jr., Interpretation (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993), 93.

<u>Literary</u>.   The sample passage functions on various levels as a part of the book of Isaiah, but due to the scope of this study, the following discussion will cover its more immediate context of chapters 1-12, with references made to other parts of the book as needed.

Three general observations have been recognized by scholars regarding the structure of Isaiah 1-12. First, the woe series (5:8-24 and 10:1-4a) and the poem on divine anger, along with Assyria as an instrument of the Lord's judgment (5:2-30 and 9:8-10:34) provide the framework for the so-called "Memoir" of the prophet, which tells of his vocational account and his encounter with Ahaz and Judah during the Syro-Ephraimite crisis (6:1-9:7).[175] Second, chapter 1 is the prologue to the entire book of Isaiah, for its message, which includes the punishment, purification and restoration of Jerusalem, is also the main concern of the book as a whole.[176] Third, chapters 1-12 comprise a distinct section, beginning with a superscription (1:1) attributing the whole book to Isaiah, and ending with a psalm that plays on his name (12:1-6).[177] A separation between 2-4 and 5-12 has been observed based on their differences in focus (2-4 on Zion and Judah while 5-12 on Judah and Israel) and on the nations' response to the Lord's reign (2-4 voluntary and 5-12 involuntary).[178] However, there seems to be a correspondence between 2-4 and 11-12 in that they are both concerned with the Lord's worldwide reign, and that while 2-4 focuses on the purification of Zion for her role in this reign, 11-12 speaks of the Lord's worldwide reign from Zion, His holy mountain (11:9), and the response of the nations there also seems voluntary (11:10). If such a correspondence between 2-4 and 11-12 has any validity, then 2-12 forms a chiastic structure, with the "memoir" in the center and chapter 1 as an introduction as follows.

1	Introduction
2-4	Zion Purified for the Lord's Worldwide Reign
5	Judgment of Israel and Judah and its Causes
	5:1-7 Expressed in the Song of the Vineyard

[175] Blenkinsopp, Isaiah 1-39, 211; cf. Marvin Sweeney, Isaiah 1-4: and the Post-exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1988), 37.
[176] Sweeney, Isaiah 1-39, 44.
[177] Blenkinsopp, Isaiah 1-39, 171; Seitz, 8; and Clements, Isaiah 1-39, 2.
[178] Sweeney, Isaiah 1-4, 62

5:8-24   Expressed in woe oracles

5:25-30   Expressed by His still outstretched hand

6:1-9:7   A Prophet Sent to A Rebellious People

9:8-10:34   Restoration of Israel and Judah and Its Conditions

9:8-10:4 Completion of His work (cf. v.12)

10:5-19 Destruction of their enemy

10:20-34 Deliverance of A Remnant

11-12   The Lord's Worldwide Reign from Zion

11   Characteristics of His kingship

12   Response of the redeemed

The following discussion on the literary context of the sample passage will cover its relationship to three of the above sections, with special focus on its corresponding section (9:8-10:34) concerning the restoration of Israel and Judah and its conditions. The study of this section, which includes the completion of the Lord's work through severe punishments, His destruction of the Assyrians, and His deliverance of a remnant people, provides clues to understanding the Lord's judgment in the sample passage in terms of the conditions required for it to end and for restoration to begin. The next consideration is the relationship of the sample passage to chapter 11 and 12 concerning the Lord's worldwide reign from Zion, which provides a contrast to the former condition that has brought about the Lord's judgment, and thus reveals the kind of kingdom the Lord desires and His good intention for putting His people through afflictions. Finally, the relationship of the sample passage to chapter 1 that sets the tone for and recapitulates the message of Isaiah will be discussed, so that its message may be understood from the overall perspective of the whole book.

In the corresponding section, the conditions that must be met before restoration begins are clearly expressed by the prophet's assurance that when the Lord has completed all His work (judgment implied) on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem (Assyrian siege in 701), Assyria will be punished and destroyed in one day (10:12, 17), then restoration will begin (1:20). The Lord's

work of judgment against His people is portrayed in 9:8-10:4. Here, the refrain in the sample

passage, "His anger does not turn away, and His hand is still stretched out" (5:25b) is repeated

four times at the end of their respective literary units (9:8-12; 13-17; 18-21 and 10:1-4). Although

the structure in each unit is different, as noted by Brown,[179] three basic elements are found in

each, namely, the Lord's punishment, the people's sins or their reaction to His punishment, and

the refrain about His anger and still outstretched hand, implying for more punishments to come.

(B-Worksheet #3p)

In the first unit (9:8-12), the sin of Israel is identified as arrogance, and their punishment

is enemy attacks from both the east and the west. Yet, as if that is not enough, the Lord's hand is

still outstretched. The second unit (9:13-17) identifies the people's reaction toward the Lord's

punishment as their not turning back to seek Him despite attacks from enemies. So the Lord

punishes by stripping off their political and religious leaders, probably referring to the aftermath

of the settlement of 733, resulting in the deterioration of the political situation to the level of

anarchy and chaos (vv.14-16).[180] Yet, as if that is not enough, the Lord's hand is still outstretched.

The third unit (9:18-21) begins with the Lord's punishment by sending catastrophes such as forest

fire burning up devastated land, and famine described as cannibalism that recalls the language of

covenant curse (vv.18-20, cf. Deut 28:53-57; Lev 26:29), and tribal strives.[181] Yet, as if that is not

enough, the Lord's hand is outstretched still. In the last unit (10:1-4), a woe oracle similar to

those of the sample passage is directed against Judah's leaders for manipulating the legal system

in order to confiscate the properties of their poor neighbors.[182] Although the process may be legal,

but from the perspective of the prophet who spoke on behalf of the poor, the widows and the

orphans, such legal transfer of property can be tantamount to robbery (3:14).[183] Therefore, as their

punishment, these wealthy oppressors and leaders of Judah and Jerusalem will be taken as

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[179] William P. Brown. "The So-Called Refrain in Isaiah 5:25-30 and 9:7-10:4." Catholic Biblical Quarterly 52 (1990): 436-37.

[180] Clements. Isaiah 1-39. 68.

[181] Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39. 219.

[182] Ibid. 212.

[183] Ibid.

prisoners in exile to save their own lives (10:1-4).[184] Yet, despite all these punishments, the anger of God has not turned away, and His hand is still stretched out until He has completed His work of punishment in Jerusalem (10:12). In other words, His anger comes to an end only when His work of punishment is complete.

The next condition that must be met before restoration takes place is the destruction of Assyria (10:5-19). The sin that causes her destruction is arrogance in overstepping her role as the rod of the Lord's anger, an agent of the Lord's discipline of His children Israel, for she is found guilty of seeking to destroy them along with many other nations. Moreover, she boasts to eliminate Jerusalem as she has done to Samaria, and arrogates to herself great strength and independence of action (vv.10-11, 13-14). As a result, judgment against Assyria is announced, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the pomp of his haughtiness" (v.12). Therefore, when the Lord has accomplished His work in Jerusalem (v.12a), Assyria will be destroyed (v.17). As the sample passage affirms of the end result of the Lord's judgment, "the eyes of the proud will be abased; but the Lord of hosts will be exalted in judgment" (5:15-16), the destruction of Assyria demonstrates that the Lord's sovereignty over human pride and arrogance reaches not only to His children Israel, but to other nations as well.

With the fall of Assyria in view, the last literary unit of the corresponding section (10:20-34) addresses the issue of Israel's and Judah's restoration (vv.20-23), which indicates that the destruction of the Northern Kingdom has already take place (722 BC) as decreed by the Lord. Due to the magnitude of the destruction, only a remnant of Jacob (Israel) has survived and will return. But there is nothing done on the part of the remnant that has brought about their preservation. It appears to be of the Lord's initiative, whose anger is spoken of as having come to an end. "For in a little while My indignation against you will be spent, and My anger will be directed to their destruction" (10:25). As affirmed in 54:8, "In an outburst of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you," it is

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[184] Clements, Isaiah 1-39, 62.

out of His compassion that He has preserved for Himself a remnant. Therefore, in the language of a new exodus, the prophet portrays their protection and deliverance from Assyria, just as their ancestors have experienced when they were delivered from Egypt. After this assurance of deliverance, he reiterates the impending fall of the Assyrian monarch (vv.27-34) to prepare them for the message of the rise of a Royal Savior.

To summarize, this section corresponding to the sample passage gives evidence to three conditions that must be met before Israel's restoration begins. First, the Lord's work of punishment for Israel's sins must be complete, that His justice and righteousness may be manifested. Second, their enemy must be destroyed, as a result of which the Lord's sovereignty over human pride and arrogance is demonstrated. Third, a remnant of His people must be preserved and delivered, that the Lord's grace may be manifested and His Name glorified.

The portrayal of the state of the restoration culminates in chapters 11 and 12, which is seen as a great reversal of the condition condemned by the prophet in the sample passage and in the first part of its corresponding section (9:8-10:4). Formerly, Israel is characterized by a lack of knowledge (5:13) and a rejection of His law and His word (5:2), resulting in their perversion of the truth, social injustice and oppression, etc. In the future restored kingdom, the ideal king upon whom the Spirit of the Lord rests will be imparted the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and strength, of knowledge and the fear of the Lord (11:2); and his judgment will be characterized by righteousness and faithfulness (11:3-5).[185] Accompanying his just social order of his ideal kingship (3-5) will be a kingdom of peace pertaining to the natural order (6-8),[186] thus portraying a harmonious coexistence of the strong and the weak in both the human and zoological realms.[187] Enmity between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms will give way to unity and peace (11:13-14). The reason given for such an ideal kingship is that "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord (11:9), and the result will be glorious (11:10). On that day, the "standard"

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[185] Joseph Jensen. "Weal and Woe in Isaiah: Consistency and Continuity." Catholic Biblical Quarterly 43 (1981): 179.

[186] Clements. Isaiah 1-39. 124.

[187] Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39. 265.

or "ensign" that the Lord has lifted up to summon the military attack from afar for Israel's punishment (5:26) will become the "root of Jesse" or the Royal Savior lifted up by the Lord, around whom all the nations gather (11:10), and as a signal for His remnant to return home (11:11-12). The Lord's hand outstretched for punishment (5:25) will turn into the hand that gathers His people from the four corners of the earth to Zion (11-12) and that waves over the River to make a highway for His people to walk over from Assyria, just as it did for the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt (15-16).

The people's response to the Lord as envisioned in the hymn of praise in chapter 12 is also a great reversal from that before the exile. Formerly, they do not pay attention to the deeds of the Lord, nor do they consider the work of His hands (5:12), and even mockingly challenge Him to hasten His work that they may see His purpose. They are arrogant, being wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight (5:21). But on that day, they will realize that His anger, aroused by their sins, has turned away and been replaced by His comfort (12:1). They will acknowledge God as their salvation (12:2-3); give thanks and call on His name, proclaim His deeds among the peoples throughout the earth and exalt His name (12:4).

To summarize, the envisioning of the state of restoration and the response of the redeemed remnant gives hope for the people of Israel and Judah, and demonstrates to them the kind of kingdom and people that the Lord desires to establish. His good intention for putting them through judgment will be made evident, for a remnant will be preserved to proclaim His work, that His name may be exalted among the nations.

Finally, the message of Isaiah 5 must be read in the context of the message of the whole book as recapitulated in chapter 1. The message of this introductory chapter that sets the tone for the whole book has much in common with chapter 5, especially in its portrayal of the problem relationship between the Lord and Israel and Judah as the latter's failure to know, as noted by Jensen (1:3; 5:13).[18] A couple of its significant messages that contribute to the understanding of

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[18] Jensen, 177.

the sample passage are the purpose or motivation of the prophet's judgment speeches as well as those of the Lord's judgment for Israel and Judah.

Similar to chapter 5, chapter 1 describes the sins of the people as violence and oppression and their turning away from justice and righteousness, with an additional note of their outward appearance of piety (1:11-15, 21-23; cf. 5:7). The cause of their sins is identified as rebellion (1:2), described in terms of a lack of knowledge, as they are compared unfavorably to the ox and the donkey: "An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master's manger; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand" (1:3; cf. 5:17);[189] and in terms of abandoning the Lord (Deut 31:16,20) and despising the Holy One of Israel (1:4; cf. 5:24). Their punishments are described in terms of wars and military attacks, resulting in exile, as evident from the imageries of bruises, welts, raw wounds, bandaged, etc. and the allusion to their land being desolate, cities burned with fire and fields taken by strangers (1:6-7; cf. 5:13, 16).

One of the messages in chapter 1 that enhances the understanding of chapter 5 is the purpose or motivation of the prophet's judgment speeches. The prophet admonishes the people to hear the word and give ear to the instruction of the Lord (v.10), which tells them to wash themselves clean by removing evil deeds and learning to do good, as expressed in seeking justice, reproving the ruthless, defending the orphan and pleading for the widow (vv.16-17). By so doing, they are promised the Lord's blessings; otherwise, they will be destroyed by the sword (vv.18-20). Such an admonition is reminiscent of the covenant blessing and curse as recorded in Deuteronomy 28. In other words, the purpose or motivation for announcing judgments is not for the sake of judgment, but for the sake of sparing the people from judgment by heeding the Lord's word. However, as forewarned by the Lord in the vocation account in chapter 6, and as demonstrated by the king's and the people's negative response to the prophetic message in chapters 7-8, the people "keep on listening but do not perceive; keep on looking but do not

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[189] Ibid., 178.

understand" (6:9-10).[190] Therefore, the only other alternative is to put them through the announced judgment. But this does not mean that those who survive the judgment are the ones who have heeded the warning and those destroyed have not. As the prophet explains, "Unless the Lord of hosts had left us a few survivors, we would be like Sodom; we would be like Gomorrah" (1:9), it is by the Lord's grace and mercy that some do survive and eventually return.

The other message in chapter 1 that contributes to the understanding of the sample passage is the purpose of the Lord's judgment for Israel. As reflected in His declaration, "I will... remove all your alloy. Then I will restore your judges...and your counselors..."(1:25-26a), restoration is conditioned by the Lord's purification through judgment. Since judges and counselors are responsible for right judgment and wise policies respectively, they affect whether or not the people do justice and righteousness and whether or not they lack knowledge, the two concerns that are repeated in both chapter 5 and in the context of 1-12. Therefore, as they are among the first ones to be stripped away (3:1-4), as typical of Assyrian practice of deportation, they will be among the first to be restored (1:26), then Zion or Jerusalem will be redeemed in justice and righteousness, and be called "the city of righteousness, a faithful city" (1:24-27). In other words, the purpose or motivation for judgment is purification, so that the people will eventually be restored, as Jensen puts it, "judgment does not simply precede the restoration, but is the very condition for it."[191]

Since the Lord's judgment on Israel and Judah is due to their lack of knowledge, and restoration, seen in terms of a restoration of knowledge (11:9) that comes at the end of judgment, the affliction that comes through judgment must be intended as a means of instruction or discipline to bring them to knowledge and restoration rather than for their destruction. This is affirmed by the reference to Israel as rebellious children of the Lord (1:2), and to Assyria's role as the "rod" and the "staff" of the Lord's anger (10:5). As His children, the Lord's intention for

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[190] Seitz, 56. He takes this quotation of the Lord's commission for the prophet to tell the people as an irony.
[191] Jensen, 173.

punishment is clearly identified as purification and correction (1:16-17), which is consistent with the imagery of the rod and the staff as instruments of chastisement rather than of destruction (Prov 13:24, 22:15, 23:13-14; 29:15; etc.). Because of such a pedagogical theme that runs through the whole context of 1-12, the dominant theme of judgment in the sample passage must be read in light of the Lord's purpose of discipline and restoration of Israel and Judah to the knowledge of, or right relationship with Himself, and the judgment they are put through must be taken as a condition of their restoration.

This concept of restoration following judgment is evident in all major sections of the book. For example, just as chapters 1-12 ends with a promise of restoration in chapters 11 and 12, 13-27 ends with the same promise in 24-27, and 28-35 in 34-35. Similarly, the entire book has the last two major sections that constitute the second half of the book (40-55 and 56-66) devoted to restoration after the Babylonian exile, which follow the first half (1-39) that focuses mostly on the announcement of judgment. Even the Song of the Vineyard does not end with Act III of the divine-human drama, in which the Lord withdraws His care and gives it up to be a trampled ground for predators. In one of the restoration sections of the book, the drama of Act IV continues by portraying the Lord as resuming His role, as He declares, "I, the Lord, am its keeper; I water it every moment... I guard it night and day. I have no wrath. Should someone give Me briars and thorns in battle, then I would...burn them completely..." (27:3-4). And the Song of the Vineyard culminates in the promise, "In the days to come, Jacob will take root, Israel will blossom and sprout; and they will fill the whole world with fruit" (27:6). Therefore, the sample passage, which focuses on judgment only, must be read in the light of the overwhelming emphasis of restoration found in the whole book. It is from this perspective that the woe series, the theme of the Lord's anger expressed by the stretched-out hand, and the sending of the Assyrian enemy in the sample passage should be understood. *(B-Worksheet #3q)*

Historical. The sample passage identifies for its pre-exilic audience the sins that have brought about the anger and disappointment of the Lord as basically human arrogance and social injustice, and it threatens them of military attacks for they have rejected the Lord's word

and ignored His work, i.e. His punishments. While this judgment speech that condemns the sins of Israel was originally delivered to an audience in Judah and Jerusalem, but as the prophetic admonition in chapter 1 makes clear, the intention was for the audience to learn from the punishments that had already taken place, so they would depart from evil and do good (1:16-17). If the audience had condemned their Northern kinsmen instead of learning from their failure and depart from their own sins, they would have missed the point.

The sample passage has special significance for the post-exilic community, for judgment as well as restoration had already taken place, precisely as the prophetic word had announced. This message of judgment would have given the remnant community the incentive, out of gratitude for the Lord's deliverance, to join the program led by their leaders, Ezra and Nehemiah, to depart from evil and live according to the requirements of the law, that the messianic kingdom would become a reality in their midst.

Reading the sample passage from the perspective of Christ's work of redemption, the New Testament community restored to right relationship with God through Christ must not take His grace for granted. While no longer condemned by sin (Rm 8:1), they must be obedient disciples of Christ out of gratitude for His salvation, and take sin seriously. For the common sins of human pride and arrogance are offenses against the sovereign God, and sins of social injustice are offenses against their neighbors created in the same image of God. In obedience to Him, His word must be followed. "Therefore, do not let sin reign... and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God" (6:12-13).

Theological Theme and Message (B-Worksheet #3r)

The Holy God desires to find justice and righteousness in His people, but finds instead human arrogance and social injustice, which violate His Word by offending both their sovereign Lord and their lowly neighbors, and thus account for His righteous anger and punishments.

CHAPTER 3

Applying the Biblical Message

Introduction

After training Bible teachers to interpret biblical texts according to their respective literary genres, the next step for increasing their effectiveness in teaching is to equip them to apply the biblical messages to the lives of Chinese American learners, that they may grow toward spiritual maturity, which is the goal of Christian education. An approach to achieving this end is the concern of this chapter. First, the goal of Christian education, in terms of what it is and how it is assessed will be identified. Second, the learners' spiritual needs and issues corresponding to their experience as the so-called "Model Minority"[1] in the American society will be analyzed in light of this goal of Christian education. Finally, a process for applying Bible lessons to life will be established: first, create a supportive community conducive to life changes; second, make a realistic assessment of the community's readiness for change in specific areas; and third, relate the biblical message to life as demonstrated by the application of the sample messages.

Identify the Goal of Christian Education

The goal or outcome of education deals with the kind of person the educator intends the learner turn out to be at the end of the educative process. To qualify as the goal of "Christian" education, the end product must be the kind of person God and Christ intend the learner turn out to be. The answer is therefore related to God's intended purpose for humankind both in creation and in regeneration. This goal along with the criteria for its assessment must be identified so that the spiritual needs and issues of the learner can be analyzed in light of them.

The Goal

The very first statement about humankind in the first chapter of Genesis is that humankind was created in the image of God (Gen 1:27). Although fallen in sin, Genesis 9:6 still affirms human dignity simply because the image of God has not been taken away. However, the

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[1] A public image that sounds positive on the surface, but ironically has created detrimental effects in reality.

New Testament reveals that this image must have been corrupted, for its renewal is deemed necessary upon regeneration (Col 3:10 and Eph 4:22-24). Romans 8:28-29 verifies that those who are called according to His purpose, meaning those who have eternal life through Jesus Christ, are "to be conformed to the image of His Son," who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15; 2 Cor 4:4), "the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature" (Heb 1:3).

Since humankind was originally created in the image of God, and though corrupted in the Fall, God willed that the same image be restored to His children through Christ, the goal or outcome of Christian education must be for learners to be conformed to the image of Christ, or renewed in the image of God. But what does it mean by the image of God and to be conformed to the image of Christ? And why are they important? According to Kline, the "image of God" and the "son of God" are twin concept.[2] For Seth, a son of Adam, is described as being in his father's own likeness, according to his image (Gen 5:3); and Adam, made in the image of God, is referred to as the "son of God" (Lk 3:38). Hence, the "image of God" is a relational term, implying that all human beings are royal children of the Creator God, created to enjoy intimate relationship with their heavenly Father. That is why they remain an object of the Father's love and redemption despite their fallen condition and broken relationship with Him.[3]

To be conformed to the image of Christ requires a process of laying aside, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the old corrupted self and putting on the new self, which in the likeness of God, is being re-created in righteousness and true holiness (Col 3:10 and Eph 4:22-24). "Righteousness" *dikaiosune* in its moral sense is the quality of being upright or just.[4] For the most part in Paul's writings, it is used of that gracious gift of God by which all who believe in Christ are brought into right relationship with Him.[5] The Greek word *hosiotes* for holiness or godliness

[2] Meredith G. Kline. Image of the Spirit (S. Hamilton, Mass.: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1986), 23.

[3] David Cairns. The Image of God in Man. (London: Collins Clear-Type Press. 1973), chap. 3.

[4] A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature. 4th rev. and augm. ed., s.v. "dikaiosune." Also Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. 1981. s.v. "righteousness."

[5] Vine's s.v. "righteousness."

means freedom from contamination (of sin).[6] In its association with "righteousness," it also involves a right relation to God.[7] In other words, the redeemed person or the community of God's people is "made" right and free from sin through Christ's redemptive work upon regeneration, so that their right standing before the holy God is restored. But they are also to "live" right and free from sin in a continuous process of sanctification after they have been regenerated. As Paul urged the Roman Christians, "so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification..." (Rm 6:19-23). In short, a redeemed person or a community of people being conformed to the image of Christ by engaging in a continuous process of sanctification is the goal of Christian education.

The Assessment

How does one assess if a person or a community of God's people is indeed conforming to the image of Christ? Or what are the criteria for assessing the goal of Christian education? Since the image of God is a relational concept, the criteria for its assessment may also be established in terms of relationships, as testified by Scripture. The first and foundational criterion is the person's relationship with God. The second criterion, closely related to the first, is the person's relationship with other people, who are also God's children by virtue of their creation in the same image. The third criterion, related to the mission statement for humankind in creation, is the person's relationship with the world.

Relationship with God. From the very beginning, humankind's right relationship with God demands obedience on the part of the children to their Father who loves and cares for them. Genesis two portrays God as a Father who abundantly provided for His children in the garden of Eden: beautiful environment, good food, perfect partner for life, dignified work, and close relationship with Himself. But the first couple forfeited that relationship, and was driven out of the garden when they disobeyed God (Gen 2:16-17). God did not give up, but elected Abraham,

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[7] A. Skevington Wood, Ephesians, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 11 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 63.

[6] Vine's, 226.

through whose obedience a promised was made to bless all the nations of the earth through his offspring (Gen 22:18). Subsequently, He established a covenant relationship with Israel, Abraham's descendents (Ex 4:22), which again required that they keep His commandments in order to enjoy His blessings in the Promised Land (Deut 6:1-3). However, they turned away in disobedience and were dispersed among the nations in exile. Finally, God sent Jesus to redeem the world to Himself. Even this unique Son of His must learn obedience through suffering, so that having been made perfect, He became to those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation (Heb 5:8). Therefore, the redeemed person or community of God's people seeking to be conformed to the image of Christ must be obedient to God and Christ in order to enjoy this loving relationship with them (Jn 14:21) and to inherit the Kingdom of His Son (Col 1:9-14).

The first and foremost of God's commandments to His children is to love and worship Him, as Christ summarized, "...love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind..." (Mt 22:37-38; cf. Deut 6:5). This means that they are to love Him whole-heartedly, acknowledging Him as the one true God from whom they owe their existence and blessings, and to whom their loyalty and total devotion. The opposite of which is to live as if He does not exist, or that they can prosper without Him (Rm 1:28),[8] or to replace God with idols: people, things and concerns of this world that become their objects of worship and devotion. (B-Worksheet #4a)

Relationship with People.   The second part of God's commandments as summarized by Christ is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:39; Lev 19:18). While Jesus lists the love of God as the first and foremost commandment. He does not hesitate to add that the second is "like" the first, meaning that the two stand together, each depending on the other for its true force. As the apostle John explains, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he

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[8] Susanne Johnson, "Education in the Image of God," in Theological Approaches to Christian Education, ed. Jack L. Seymour and Donald E. Miller (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 130.

has not seen" (1 Jn 4:20). In other words, loving God's children is an evidence of the claim to loving the invisible God. In the community of God's people, unity and love among them serve as a testimony to the world of who Christ is, and of God's love for them (Jn 17:23).

But "neighbors" are not restricted to those within the community of faith. When this imperative was first given, the context explicitly includes also aliens on the basis that the children of Israel were once aliens in Egypt (Lev 19:34). In Christ's own life and teaching, "neighbors" include both the good and the evil, even enemies, on the basis that God loves them all (Mt 5:43-47). This is consistent with the fundamental principle that all persons, being made in His image, are God's offspring (Acts 17:26-29), so loved by Him that His Son came to suffer crucifixion on their behalf, in order that none should perish (Jn 3:16). Therefore, Jesus urged his disciples, as obedient children of God, to imitate the Father and love them all (Mt 5:45,48).

This love for people must be demonstrated in concrete actions (1 Jn 3:18). In the context of the 10 commandments (Ex 20) and in that of the imperative to love one's neighbor (Lev 19), it begins in the home with honoring parents, and it is expressed by being honest, kind and just, and by guarding, or not violating other people's human rights. When wronged or sinned against by neighbors, one may reprove and confront them with their wrong doings, but not take vengeance or hold grudges against them (Lev 19:17; cf Mt 18:15-17), for both Testaments affirm that vengeance belongs to the Lord (Deut 23:35; Ps 94:1; Rm 12:19; Heb 10:30). The New Testament also lists concrete actions toward neighbors such as speaking the truth; putting away bitterness, anger and slander; and being kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, etc. as an evidence of being recreated in the likeness of God (Eph 4:31-32).

Finally, compassionate care for the poor and needy plays a significant part in the imperative to love one's neighbor. It is rooted in God's compassion, as evidenced by the special provisions made in God's Law for those disadvantaged in race, sex and class: the aliens, widows, and slaves, respectively (Ex 22:21-24; Deut 15:12-15). God demanded that His children Israel share His compassionate care for them as He had treated Israel when they were needy and oppressed in Egypt (Ex 22:21-27; Deut 10:18-19). Like His Father, Christ also exemplified

compassion for the needy. When He saw the crowds, harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd (Mt 9:36), the sick brought to Him for healing (Mt 14:14), the thousands tired and hungry (Mk 8:2) and the widow of Nain whose only son was dead (Lk 7:13), He felt with them in the center of His being.[9] And He made the same demand of His disciples, "Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate" (Lk 6:36). When He comes again to judge the nations, people who have ministered to the least among them will be considered as having ministered to Himself, and such services are concrete expressions of the compassionate life and final evidence of being in covenant relationship with the compassionate Lord (Mt 25:31-46). *(B-Worksheet #4b)*

Relationship with the World.   Made in the image of God, humankind was entrusted with the responsibility to "rule over" His creation in Genesis one, a mission that is specified in Genesis two as to "serve" *abad* and to "guard" or "exercise great care over" *samar* the Garden of Eden.[10] In other words, humankind is to exercise stewardship over all resources, including the natural environment, material possessions, human creative abilities, etc., entrusted by the Creator, who is the ultimate Owner. Since this mission statement was given immediately after the declaration of God's intent to create humankind in His own image (1:26), and repeated as a blessing after the actual creation of humankind (1:27-28), the exercise of responsible stewardship through meaningful work must be regarded as essential for human dignity as created in the image of God.

Apart from engaging in meaningful work, stewardship also involves both individual and corporate responsibilities in distributing and sharing resources entrusted to them. In Israel, lands were distributed for the people's inheritance according to their population (Num 26:52-56), so that they all had material resources to live on, over which they exercised faithful stewardship. And God promised that if they shared generously their material blessings with the poor and needy

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[9] Donald P. McNeill, Douglas A. Morrison, and Henri Nouwen, Compassion: A Reflection on the Christian Life (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982), 17.

[10] Victor P. Hamilton, The Book of Genesis, Chapters 1-17, New International Commentary on the Old Testament, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 171.

according to the Law, there should be no poor among them (Deut 4-5). The Early church also testified to economic sharing among God's people: owners sold their lands or houses and shared the proceeds of the sales with the needy, as a result of which "there was not a needy person among them" (Acts 4:34-35). Paul's collection of an international offering for the poor in Jerusalem was another example, and He cited Christ's example of becoming poor so His people could be rich as a motivation, and the Exodus story of God's provision of manna as a principle of equality (2 Cor 8-9).

For the community of faith, a spiritual dimension was added to this mission of stewardship over God's Kingdom. The election of Abraham was for the purpose of blessing all the nations of the earth through his offspring (Gen 22:18). As the collective offspring of Abraham, Israel was entrusted with the servant role of being a light to the nations, that His salvation may reach to the end of the earth (Isa 49:6). When Christ came, He fulfilled this servant role by His crucifixion on the cross and brought salvation to the world. After His resurrection, He commissioned His disciples. "Going therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you..." (Mt 2:19-20). The imperative is to make disciples, and as expressed by the three participles, the means are by going, baptizing and teaching. The implication is that by going to the world with the good news of Christ's salvation, baptizing converts into the Body of Christ, and teaching them all the commandments of the Lord, obedient disciples will be made, and God's Kingdom will be extended.

The nature of this mission is further clarified in Luke 4:18-19 as Christ quoted the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." And He commissioned His disciples, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you" (Jn 20:21). Therefore, the Christians' mission to proclaim the good news of Christ's salvation to the world is to be accompanied by the power of the Kingdom of God, as demonstrated by acts of love and

compassion in the release of the captives, restoration of the disadvantaged, freedom to the oppressed. The implication is, due to human fallenness, sin has become embedded not only in the human nature, but also in the socioeconomic structures of all societies.[11] As a result, injustice and suffering often prevail for people in the lower strata. Therefore, the preaching of the Gospel must be accompanied by the confrontation of unjust systems and practices that cause their suffering and violate their human dignity. In other words, it takes both spiritual conversion and structure changes to effectively restore human dignity to all persons.[12] *(B-Worksheet #4c & 4d)*

Therefore, to conform to the image of Christ being the goal of Christian education, the tasks of the Christian educator are to assist persons in three areas:

1. Nurture relationship with God by accepting Jesus Christ as Savior, and honoring Him as Lord, as expressed in obedience to His Word.

2. Nurture relationship with people by loving and respecting persons, as demonstrated in concrete acts of kindness.

3. Nurture relationship with the world by exercising stewardship over material resources, as demonstrated in meaningful work and sharing of possessions; and over spiritual resources, as demonstrated in the proclamation of the Good News of Christ, accompanied by acts of compassion and justice.

Analyze the Learners' Experience

Asian Americans can be separated into seventeen distinctive ethnic groups and nine other groups of Pacific Islanders.[13] However, most literatures deal with their experience collectively, because they, especially the former 17 groups, do share much in common. According to the 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census, Chinese Americans constituted 22.6% of the Asian Pacific American population,[14] which in turn represented 2.9% of the total American population.[15] Hence, the term

[11] Ronald J. Sider. Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America (Grand Rapids: Baker Books. 1999). 54.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ken Uyeda Fong. Pursuing the Pearl: A Comprehensive Resource for Multi-Asian Ministry (Valley Forge. Pa.: Judson Press. 1999). 34-35.

[14] Ibid. 225.

"Asian American" is inclusive of "Chinese American," and the experience of the latter is generally understood in the context of the former.

In light of the goal of Christian education and the criteria for its assessment identified in the previous section, this section analyzes the learners' spiritual needs and issues corresponding to their experience as impacted by the public image of being a "Model Minority" in the American society. Asian Americans are so designated or celebrated due to their academic and economic achievements and successful assimilation into the American society. But as will be made evident in the following discussion, that image has detrimental effects on many aspects of their lives. Four of the most significant experiences of Chinese Americans in the context of the larger community of Asian Americans will be discussed in this section, each of which is to be followed by an analysis of the learners' spiritual needs and issues corresponding to that experience. This analysis is carried out in light of the criteria for assessing the achievement of the goal of Christian education discussed in the previous section, and in preparation for addressing these needs and issues in the application of the three sample Bible lessons in the following section.

The four significant experiences are: 1. academic and economic achievements; 2. discriminations; 3. intergenerational conflicts; and 4. poverty and social injustice. While the first experience meets the classic expectation of the "Model Minority" public image, the last three are invisible on the surface; and while the first three are common to most Asian Americans, the fourth is a special condition that applies only to a small yet significant percentage of them.

Academic and Economic Achievements

The great emphasis Asian Americans place on academic achievement has its deep cultural roots. For the Chinese, historically, scholars were regarded as the most noble of all professions, even superior to the highest officials of the royal court. While the reward might not be wealth, it certain established for them an elite status in society. Since the United States

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[5] Benjamin R. Tong, "Asian American Psychology: A Critical Introduction," in Ethnicity and Psychology, ed. Kenneth P. Monteiro (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall, 1995), 119.

provides tremendous opportunities for college and post-graduate education, with the promise of economic stability or success to follow, many Asians would take advantage of immigration opportunities, despite the sacrifices they have to make for this dream to come true for themselves and for their children.

The Chinese American Experience.   Since the U.S. Immigration Reform Act of 1965 favored the entry of scientific, technical and professional personnel, the large proportion of middle-class Asian immigrants from then on has resulted in an academically advantaged second generation of children.[16] Beginning in 1985, another distinct wave of Asian immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, etc. has brought entrepreneurs and investors with investment capital, so the economic status of this group has been the highest ever among immigrants.[17] In the early 1980s, tens of thousands of students and scholars from Mainland China came to the U.S., and some of them gained immigrant status upon finding employment.[18] After the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 when the student movement in Beijing was violently suppressed by the Chinese government, the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Student Protection Act in 1992, rendering 52,425 Chinese students and scholars in the U.S. the permanent resident status.[19] As a result, another group of Chinese American scholars was added to the American scene, awaiting the rise of yet another second generation of academically advantaged children.

As early as December 1966, U.S. News and World Report had published an article focusing on Chinese Americans. "Success Story of One Minority in the U.S.," as a narrative of triumphant ethnic assimilation.[20] On December 1, 1983, the San Francisco Chronicle made the following comments: Asian Americans are today held to be among the most economically

[16] Robert G. Lee, Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), 188.
[17] Ellen Tanouye, "The Church as Mediator between Cultures," in People On the Way, ed. David Ng (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1996), 197.
[18] Fenggang Yang, Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation and Adhesive Identities (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 40.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Lee, 149.

successful minority group in the country, exceeding all other groups in income and education.[21]

In 1988, ten out of twelve winners of the prestigious Westinghouse Prizes for achievement in science among high school students were Asian Americans.[22]

Today, around 25% of undergraduates at Harvard, Stanford, Wellesley, Northwestern and the University of Pennsylvania are Asian Americans.[23] In California, where 40% of Asian Americans live, they constitute most of the undergraduates at UC Irvine, and the largest racial group among undergraduates at UCLA, UC Riverside and UC Berkeley.[24] According to a study in 1990, 46.7% of Chinese American men and 35% of Chinese American women, as compared to 25% white men and 18.4% white women, had four or more years of college.[25] Stanley N. Katz, a historian at Princeton, predicted that Asian American students may become the next minority group to profoundly shape American intellectual life.[26] Given the high percentage of their academic achievements, Asian Americans are establishing themselves as key leaders in the academia and professional fields, and economically, most of them have attained at least a middle-class status.[27]

However, these achievements are not attained without a high premium Asian American parents, Christians included, invest on their children. They coach their studies personally or pay for private tutoring, chauffeur them back and forth between school, private lessons, extra-curricular activities, and the home. They coordinate their moves so all their children may attend the best schools at various stages, and often times, it involves paying the highest cost of home mortgages to live in the best school district in town. Their hearts and minds are often preoccupied with how their children can get ahead in their studies. How can they be encouraged to make straight A(s)? Where can they be sent for preparation to get the highest SAT scores? What kind of

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[21] Huping Ling, Surviving on the Gold Mountain: A History of Chinese American Women and Their Lives (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 140.
[22] Lee, 185.
[23] Fong, 40.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ling, 141.
[26] Fong, 40.
[27] Ibid., 48.

voluntary services and extra-curriculum activities do they need in order to enhance the chance of getting into the best colleges? What are some of the most promising professions for their future? Being so wrapped up in their academic pursuits, there is little energy left in parents for their children's character building or spiritual formation.

The elite status of the educated and competitiveness among parents and children are well accepted in the Chinese American community, and Christians are not immune from such an ideology and practice. In the churches, it is common practice to place the highly educated in positions of leadership, rendering those who are not voiceless and invisible. Competitiveness is evident in the casual exchange of parental remarks about their children's accomplishments, such as good grades, high SAT scores, awards, acceptance to top schools and universities, etc. Such competitiveness often results in pride and arrogance for those who do well, and jealousy and low self-esteem for those who fall short of expectations. This kind of cultural value fits right into the "Model Minority" performance trap that needs to be critically examined.

Besides academic achievements, another one of the "Model Minority" virtues is savings and accumulation of wealth, their major investments being in property or home ownership. According to Fong's study, though they lagged behind the total population in home ownership in 1980 (52% as compared to a median of 64%), those who did own had homes of a much higher median value than those of the average American ($82,000 as compared to $47,000).[28] Although part of the disparity was due to the higher concentration of Asian American population living in urban areas where homes values have been among the highest.[29] Apart from home ownership, It is also a common practice for Chinese Americans to accumulate wealth for their children's education, marriage, and eventually inheritance.

Spiritual Needs and Issues.   The first and foremost of commandments being to love God and shun idolatry, the greatest temptation for the Chinese American Christians is to worship academic achievement. Their concern for their children's academic achievement even over

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[28] Fong, 41.
[29] Ibid.

character and spiritual development certainly does not demonstrate consistent devotion to God, even though they may be faithful in attending church services and activities. They must be challenged to evaluate critically their value system, to see if it measures up to biblical priorities such as bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Indeed, they need to reflect honestly if academic pursuits have not replaced the rightful place of God in their lives.

Love and respect for all people based on the equal worth and dignity of humankind created in the image of God leaves no room for elitism. Competitiveness in academic pursuits hinders the respect for people and the spirit of cooperation among them; therefore, it hurts rather than promotes Christian fellowship in the churches. As elitism and competitiveness often lead to jealousy from peers, arrogant Chinese Americans have to take responsibility for some cases of racial discrimination against them in society. Worse still, they often lead to their discrimination against others.

Their growing concern over wealth and material possessions can easily lead to pride, greed, complacency, and dependency on them rather than on God, the Giver. The practice of accumulating wealth for children not only perpetuates the children's dependency on parents, a common problem among some Asian American young adults; more seriously, it is a reflection of the lack of trust in God to provide for their children's needs. Indirectly, they are teaching their children by their own example to depend on wealth rather than on the Giver of wealth.

In terms of Christian mission and stewardship, such high view of academic and socioeconomic achievements discourages the less educated or lowly in social status from leadership or even attending churches. This is a far cry from Christ's desire of preaching the good news to the poor. Sensitivity must be raised and sincere efforts made to reach out to them and to draw them out for full participate in the body life of the church (Eph 4). *(B-Worksheet #4e)*

Discrimination

Asian Americans are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of discrimination, for it is part of their cultural value, especially for females, to be that "passive, industrious, non-

complaining, meek and mild servant,"[30] which again fits right into that "Model Minority" public

image to their disadvantage. Even more so, Christians are taught from childhood to be meek and

gentle servants, and forgiving of evils done to them. Since these qualities are both deep-rooted in

their culture and consistent with the Kingdom ethics that Jesus taught in Matthews, Chinese

American Christians have a tendency to suffer discrimination silently. Within the family and the

church community, due to deep-rooted cultural value and practice as well as uncritical acceptance

of the fundamentalist traditional view on woman's role, sex discrimination is the norm.

The Chinese American Experience.   On the less serious end of racial discrimination,

there is an increasing amount of complaint from non-Asians about the over-representation of and

competition from Asians in post-secondary institutions.[31] Racial slurs such as "look out for the

Asian invasion," MIT means Made In Taiwan," "UCLA stands for University of Caucasians Lost

among Asians"[32] and "UC Irvine is University of Chinese Immigrants" have surfaced.[33] White

alumni express concern about Asian-American students taking away their slots, so that legacy

admission slots reserved for children of alumni have come to function as an invisible affirmative-

action program for whites.[34]

While Asian Americans are increasing in numbers on university campuses as students,

they are hardly found to be administrators: at U.C. Berkeley where they constituted a quarter of

the student body in 1987, only one out of 102 top level administrators was an Asian![35] This

pattern of Asian absence from executive leadership is characterized as the "glass ceiling," a

barrier through which top management positions can only be seen, but not reached.[36] To justify

such kind of racial discrimination, as Takali points out, Asian Americans are often told they are

[30] Tong, 120.
[31] Paul M. Ong, "California's Asian Population: Projections and Implications for the Year 2000," in Bearing Dreams, Shaping Visions: Asian Pacific American Perspectives, ed. Linda A. Revilla, Gail M. Nomura, Shawn Wong, and Shirley Hune (Pullman, Wash.: Washington State University Press, 1993), 75.
[32] Ronald Takali, Strangers From a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 479.
[33] Fong, 40.
[34] Takali, 479.
[35] Ibid., 476.
[36] Ibid.

inarticulate and have an accent, which is perceived as a problem at work, while whites with

German, French or other European accents do not seem to be similarly handicapped.[37]

The concept of Asian American "success" in terms of income often makes discrimination

invisible. For example, their median income, around $42,250 per family in the 1980s and 1990s

and slightly higher than that for white families, has often been cited to illustrate their success

story.[38] But this ignores the facts that the majority of their population lives in California, Hawaii

and New York, where the cost of living was higher than elsewhere in the U.S., and that the

number of persons working per family was 2.0 for immigrant Chinese versus 1.6 non-Hispanic

white Americans in 1980.[39] Therefore, when controlled for geography and number of wage

earners per family, their mean personal income was only about two thirds that of the white

families, even though the percentage of college graduates among Chinese Americans nearly

doubled that of white Americans.[40]

On the more serious end, the "Model Minority" designation has been used not only

against Asian Americans, but also against other minority ethnic groups as well. In 1985, David

Bell, in an essay of the New Republic, "The Triumph of Asian Americans," characterized them as

making no demands for institutional change.[41] This article was followed by another article in the

same issue entitled "Brown Blacks," characterizing a student movement at Brown University as a

solely black protest, contrary to the evidence of multiracial involvement.[42] Thus, the "Model

Minority" concept was used to find fault with those minorities who asked for change![43] The

stereotype to be emulated by other Americans of color is therefore, "the passive, industrious, non-

complaining, meek and mild servant," the end result being what Tong describes as "a well-

[37] Ibid. 477.
[38] Ibid. 475.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Lee. 184.
[42] Ibid. 185.
[43] Leland Saito. "Contrasting Patterns of Adaptation: Japanese Americans and Chinese Immigrants in Monterey Park." in Bearing Dreams, Shaping Visions: Asian Pacific American Perspectives. ed. Linda A. Revilla. Gail M. Nomura. Shawn Wong, and Shirley Hune (Pullman, Wash.: Washington State University Press. 1993). 41.

behaved, self-monitoring Model Minority, caught in the jaws between high educational achievements and low income level and workplace status as compared to white Americans!"[44]

According to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights of 1986, negative reaction to immigrants and their culture, and racially motivated attacks on Asians had been on the rise.[45] An example of the former was the movement in the early 80s to ban Chinese commercial signs in the business district, and block the donation of Chinese books to the public library in Monterey Park, the first Chinese suburban community in America.[46] An example of the latter was the murder of Vincent Chin, a Chinese American mistaken to be a Japanese, by two white autoworkers who blamed Japan for Detroit's massive unemployment in 1982; but they were sentenced to only three years' probation and a $3,780 fine each, without spending a single night in jail.[47] A most recent example is the nine-month imprisonment of the Chinese American nuclear scientist Wen Ho Lee. Charged with 59 counts of mishandling national security information, including one "with intent to injure the U.S. and with intent to secure an advantage to a foreign nation," he was released only after an FBI agent recanted former testimony against him, and a deal was cut which dismissed all but one minor charge of the 59 counts.[48]

Within the Chinese American community, sex discrimination is prevalent, especially in the Christian circle. While women's lifestyles have been liberated to a certain extent due to the rapid cultural change in today's American society, the constant use of male-centered eisegesis of biblical passages in the evangelical churches serves to harass the Christian women.[49] Since most pastors are male graduates of evangelical seminaries, the message from the pulpit continues to idolize the authoritative male and submissive female model.[50] Similarly, the Asian culture reinforces patriarchalism: a female's assertiveness is often labeled as aggressiveness, and the

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[44] Tong, 120-21.
[45] Ong, 79.
[46] Saito, 39-40.
[47] Takaki, 482.
[48] Michael Duffy, "The Long Way Home," Time, 25 Sept. 2000, 29-32.
[49] Young Lee Hertig, "Asian North American Women in the Workplace and the Church," in People on the Way, ed. David Ng (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1996), 113.
[50] Fong, 180.

value of a woman is evaluated according to how well she serves the image of the submissive woman.[51] As a result, Asian Christian women tolerate a double dosage of cultural and theological patriarchalism.[52] The problem becomes more acute when they are placed in leadership positions. Hertig recorded these stories.[53]

> An ordained minister in her thirties:

>> People who do not know me treat me as a secretary. Once they find out that I am a pastor, they often cannot hide their surprise and do not know what to do with me. A friend of mine is not a pastor. Yet, with his tall height and gentle appearance, people call him pastor...Ironically, he has to correct people that he is not a pastor.

> An Asian American seminary teacher with a Ph.D. in theology:

>> One year...I said that I would like to teach during the Spring quarter. When I called back two weeks later, the man said that I was not scheduled to teach in the Spring. I told him I had been counting on teaching in the Spring and had arranged my other schedule around it. The man simply gave the phone to his coworker and the man under him took the blame and apologized.

> A second-generation Chinese American seminarian:

>> I have applied for an internship at the Chinese church where I attend. The church does not know where to place me because I do not fit the categories for children ministry or youth work. I have been labeled as a feminist...having strayed from Chinese values and proper ways of behaving as a "good Chinese woman.

Many women in Chinese American churches today are given very little opportunity to take leadership roles or to participate in the decision making body. In some churches they are not even allowed to teach adult Sunday School; or if so, must work in partnership with male co-teachers. Even though many of them have significant leadership roles at work due to their high academic achievements, they are not finding a supportive environment in the church to exercise their spiritual gifts to full potential.

> Spiritual Needs and Issues. The sin of discrimination is basically a sin of violating the human right and dignity of God's children, and by so doing, the Father is also violated. As

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[51] Hertig, 119.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 109-10, 121.

His offspring and obedient disciples, Christians, especially those in privileged positions, are to act in accordance with His character and concern. They must be challenged to stand in solidarity with the lowly and disadvantaged, and oppose structures and practices that violate God's righteousness.

For those who suffer discrimination, whether racial or sex, the issue is more complex: on the one hand, Christians are to love their enemies and not to take vengeance; on the other, love of neighbor involves reproving or confronting the evildoer. Yet victims of discrimination are usually deeply hurt, being filled with fear and anger, and thus incapable of doing either. There is a need for inner healing, emotional support and spiritual comfort, and for opportunities to express their fear and anger to the Lord in prayer as well as to the community of faith, that they may find support and even legal assistance if necessary. They must also be challenged to deal with structural problems, not only for their own sake, but also for those in the lower strata of society, who suffer worse discrimination and exploitation than they do.

Relationship between man and woman in the home and in the church must also be critically examined. The present practice obviously violates the principle of male and female being equally made, both in creation and regeneration. The issue of equality and healthy relationship between the sexes must be raised to a conscious level. In terms of stewardship over God's Kingdom resources, the spiritual gifts of women must be discovered, developed, and utilized, making all people accountable to the Lord for the building up of the Body of Christ. *(B-Worksheet #4f)*

Intergenerational Conflicts

As much as the "Model Minority" public image conveys the message that all is well with Asian Americans: high achievements, intact families, smart and disciplined children, etc., hidden behind that mask are definitely broken dreams and internal conflicts within the families and churches. As the projection of California's Asian population for the year 2000 reveals: with 16.2% of children (14 and under); 52.3% of youth (15-24); 78.6% of working adult (25-64); and

83.2% of the elderly (over 64) being foreign-born,[54] the adult Asian Americans are mostly foreign-born and their children, mostly American-born. Due to basic value differences between the Asian and the American cultures, intergenerational conflicts can certainly be anticipated.

The Chinese American Experience. The first generation of Chinese Americans left their homeland with the American dream: freedom, education, prosperity, happiness, etc., but it was accompanied by the guilt and fear that absorption into the American culture will result in the loss of their own.[55] Their children, being brought up in America, do not share such fears and take the dream for granted. A survey of 63 parents and teenagers ages 12 to 16 in an Asian American church in California conducted in 1993 reflects some of the most difficult issues and problems faced by parents in raising children. They include: bad influences from the American society, the children's lack of interest in Asian manners and etiquette, language and culture barriers, poor communication, limited time and energy to spend with them due to long hours and hard work, and worry about their dating and marriage.[56] A story related by Kim illustrates how the American Dream became a Nightmare for a Chinese immigrant couple from Hong Kong.[57]

> My husband and I decided to emigrate from Hong Kong to the United States about ten years ago. We had an American dream: better educational opportunities for our children.... As we've watched our children growing and rapidly changing, we've begun to have serious doubts about the way children are taught in schools. Schools... are not strict enough.... The students have too much freedom and too many choices.... They start to date very early. We are upset, confused, and at a loss as to how to raise our children.

Another story from the perspective of a 14-year-old female Chinese American gives a clear picture of the dynamic of power struggle between the two generations.[58]

> My parents are very protective of me and don't let me do anything...If I want to go out with my friends, my parents find ways to say no. So in order to leave the house, I make up excuses.... They pressure me to do well in school, and just to get them mad, I do poorly in my classes. They don't seem to understand that I

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[54] Ong, 71-78.
[55] Fong, 39-40.
[56] Grace Sangok Kim, "Asian North American Immigrant Parents and Youth: Parenting and Growing Up in a Cultural Gap," in People on the Way, ed. David Ng (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1996), 132-34.
[57] Ibid., 130.
[58] Ibid.

need room to grow, and in trying to protect me from harm, they've made me become more rebellious.

These intergenerational conflicts seem to stem from the basic differences in values between the Asian culture and the American culture as cited by Kim.[37]

Asian Culture	American Culture
Family-oriented	Individual-oriented
Interdependent	Autonomous
Vertical, authoritarian	Horizontal, democratic
Respect for parents & elders	Variable, depending on family
Family loyalty, filial piety	Self-determination & personal happiness
Duty, obedience	Freedom of choice and independence

Due to the authoritarian cultural norm, many Chinese American parents tend to exercise strong control over their children's lives: style of clothing, extra-curriculum activities, career choices, boyfriends or girlfriends, life-partners, etc. Many children resent them as undemocratic and restrictive of personal freedom. This has resulted in rebelliousness for some and dependency among others.

Another significant factor that accounts for the conflicts is again the excessive emphasis placed on academic achievement. Apart from traditional value and social pressure, Asian American parents have high hopes that a college and post-graduate education will spare their children of racial obstacles, which they themselves face, as common to first generation immigrants. Hence, they put pressure on their children to excel academically. Being brought up in a society with more career choices and opportunity for a college education, their children tend to take it for granted. After all, high achievement in school does not guarantee success in the work place! The pressure their parents place on them becomes unreasonable and at times irrelevant!

In churches, intergenerational conflicts are also found between the older Chinese-speaking congregation consisting of foreign-born adults, and the younger English-speaking congregation consisting mostly of American-born youths and young adults. The former is generally the larger and more dominant group, and its pastor, being usually foreign-born, bi-lingual and supported by Board members of similar background, almost always takes up the

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[37] Ibid., 137.

position of senior pastor. The one who pastors the English-speaking congregation, being usually English speaking only, remains the assistant pastor. Cultural differences between the pastors and between congregations, along with other personal, theological, and emotional factors, often result in unresolved feelings, miscommunication and conflicts.[60] The cultural gap is sometimes intensified when a Caucasian staff, generally welcomed by the English-speaking congregation, is called to serve as an assistant pastor. Many churches suffer the unfortunate consequences of fast turnover of pastoral staff, exodus of members and even church splits. According to a source Fong cites, well over 75% of American-born Chinese end up leaving their own churches.[61]

Spiritual Needs and Issues. Intergenerational conflicts being caused by primarily cultural factors, the issue involves differentiating between and listening to the voice of Scripture and the voice of culture. While many Chinese American Christians are industrious in studying God's Word, there is a tendency to overlook perspectives that challenge their traditional values and practices. Deep-rooted cultural ideology and practice such as elitism of the educated, hierarchical relationships, authoritarian in parenting and in church government, superiority of the Chinese culture or the American culture, etc., are seldom critically examined.

Unresolved conflicts among members of families and of churches violate the love of neighbor commandment. Both generations must be challenged to make effort to understand and develop respect for each other and to respect cultural differences, and obey the biblical imperative of being kind, tender hearted and forgiving of one another. The Christian educator must also help people analyze the detrimental consequences of conflicts, and guide them toward developing proper attitudes and skills to resolve them. If the problem is not urgently addressed, it will ultimately hurt their collective testimony of love and unity before the unbelieving world.

In terms of stewardship, Chinese American Christian parents have failed to demonstrate in concrete actions what they know intellectually that their children are gifts from God, over whom they are stewards rather than owners. They need to develop the conviction and experience

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[60] Yang, 100ff.
[61] Fong, 175.

the freedom that the Lord is in control of their children's lives, which is far better than what they can do for them, for He is their Creator God who, having created them in His image, is the true owner and designer of their destiny! *(B-Worksheet #4g)*

Poverty and Social Injustice

Although most Asian immigrants of recent decades are characterized by high academic achievements and professional skills, and are therefore able to bypass the urban ghetto,[62] others are less fortunate. They may be the original immigrants' less educated relatives whom the former sponsor for immigration.[63] Another group is the Vietnamese Chinese political refugees of the mid 70s. And in the last couple of decades, there are the illegal aliens from Mainland China. Due to their lack of proficiency in the English language and in professional skills, along with other personal, circumstantial as well as structural problems in society, they can easily be struck with poverty, or become victims of social injustice.

The Chinese American Experience.   Official statistics show that a disproportionate and increasing percentage of Asian Americans have incomes below Federal poverty guidelines, despite the blooming economy in the U.S. during the last decade. There were 11% of Asian American as compared to 8% of non-Hispanic white families in 1990,[64] and 12% as compared to 5% of non-Hispanic white in 1997,[65] who lived below poverty level. The problem is even more acute in urban centers. A study reveals that 15% of Chinese families in New York city had incomes below federal poverty level.[66] According to statistics found in September 2000 by the Coalition for Asian American Children and Families of New York City (www.cacf.org): 48% of Asian American births are paid by Medicaid, which means the mothers are poor or near poor; 24% of adults over 25 have less than a high school diploma; 36% are high school drop-outs (or do not graduate on time); and 46% households are linguistically isolated, which means they do not have anyone over 14 who can speak English well.

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[62] Yang, 39.
[63] Ibid, 97.
[64] Lee, 189.
[65] Fong, 42.
[66] Lee, 151.

Besides the problem of poverty, many immigrants fall prey to exploitation in their sincere attempts to making a living. Illegal aliens who have been smuggled over from China through "snakehead operations"[7] are among the victims. According to a recent issue of Time Magazine, the current charge is $60,000 per head for the trip, and those who cannot afford the down payment or do not have sponsors in the U.S. may be charged 30% annual interest of loans from snakeheads, which would keep them working to pay off the debts over a very long period of time.[8] Some of these illegal aliens and other new immigrants live around Chinatowns for language reasons or for low-skill employments. They may find jobs in restaurants, gift shops, garment factories, etc. that pay salaries in cash, but they may not get paid the minimum wage. Another type of exploitation of workers involves college graduates who seek employment to change their legal status from foreign students to permanent residents through the sponsorship of their employers. Many of them are offered very low salaries and/or without health insurance and benefits in exchange for sponsorship. Some of these employers take their time in the legal process so as to take advantage of the cheap labor of these college graduates!

Asian American groups that are not doing well, that is, failing to meet up to the standard of "Model Minority," have been rendered invisible,[9] both by their own community and by the larger American society. For example, they are hardly found in the Christian community, perhaps with the exception of some Chinatown churches that make a conscientious effort to reach out to them. Since Chinese Americans take pride in self-reliance, they are insensitive to the needs of those who cannot make their ends meet. For the Christians, especially those living in the suburbs, their only exposure to works of compassion is perhaps the monthly collection of offering after the Lord's supper for "mercy ministry" rendered the needy in times of emergency. But its amount and distribution are seldom made known to the congregation, due to strict confidentiality kept toward those who receive help. As a result, little is achieved in terms of education and motivation

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[7] Organized efforts that smuggle illegal immigrants from China or Southeast Asia to the U.S. and European countries.

[8] Edward Barnes. "Two-faced Woman." Time. 31 July 2000. 20-21.

[9] Takaki. 478.

for compassion ministry.

In the larger American society, they have also escaped attention. For example, of the 15% of Chinese families in New York city that fall below poverty level, only 3.4% has enrolled to receive public assistance; but instead of raising concern over the other 11.6%, this statistic has even been boasted as an example of a cultural trait of self-reliance and family cohesion.[70] On the other hand, assuming Asian Americans have succeeded, government officials have sometimes denied funding for social service programs to help those who are not doing well to learn English or to find employment.[71] Hence, the designation "Model Minority" has actually become a stumbling block to those who do not fare well with that public image.

Spiritual Needs and Issues.   The fundamental issue of poverty and injustice is related to God's compassionate care for the poor and needy, and Jesus urged His disciples, being God's beloved children, to imitate the Father. The fact that there is a significant and increasing percentage of Chinese Americans living below poverty guidelines yet not too many of them are found in their churches reflects the attitude of indifference or their failure in reaching out to them. Chinese Americans must be confronted with the overwhelming biblical evidence of God's concern for the poor and the needy, and His judgment upon those who fail to meet the needs of the disadvantaged in society, and be challenged to take action accordingly.

When the love of neighbor principle applies to loving the poor and needy, it involves respecting and protecting their human rights and dignity. As more and more Chinese Americans are becoming entrepreneurs, they may be challenged to help the disadvantaged by applying biblical principles to their practices in the business world. Since the right to work and make a decent living is crucial to human dignity, they may provide such opportunities. Following the examples of some Christian corporations in the American society as cited by Sider, they may offer trainings and jobs to welfare recipients or new immigrants; practice "developing people through work" rather than "getting work done through people;" emphasize servant leadership and

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[70] Lee, 151.
[71] Takaki, 478.

respectful treatment of employees; and offer above average wages and benefits. [72]

Since most Chinese American families and churches are doing well economically, they
need to reexamine their stewardship over material possessions. They must realize that their
abundance in resources are entrusted to them by the Lord, and it is meant to be shared generously
with the needy as a proof of obedience to the confession of the Gospel of Christ, so that God may
receive glory and thanksgiving (2 Cor 9:6-15). Traditionally, evangelical churches tend to give
toward direct evangelism only, but with proper education on Christian responsibility toward the
poor, a more balanced distribution of material resources must be made. (B-Worksheet #4h)

Establish a Process for Application

Now that the needs and issues of the Chinese Americans have been raised, the remaining
task for this chapter is to determine how biblical messages can be applied to address them. It is
obvious that these needs and issues require a supportive community and long-term and persistent
attention for their application, due to the fact that deep-rooted cultural values and social structures
can hardly be changed. The matter is further complicated by the factor that each local church is
different in terms of her available resources and readiness to address these issues. In the following
section, a rationale and proposal is made for creating a supportive community conducive to
learning that leads to life changes, to be followed by a realistic assessment of the people's
readiness for change and the kind of progress that can be anticipated in addressing the four major
issues. Then the application of each of the three sample messages both within and beyond the
classroom setting will be discussed. [73]

Create a Supportive Community (B-Worksheet #4j)

The Bible upholds the Christian faith community as the primary context for the important
task of Christian education. As the Apostle Paul declares, "He...gave some to be apostles...
prophets...evangelists, and...pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service.

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[72] Sider. 116f.
[73] Responses from workshop participants and individuals using this resource are needed for local church
application.

so that the body of Christ may be built up...and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:11-13). Such a community concept finds support among Christian educators. Smallbones regards instruction and socialization as essential in the education of the faith community.[74] The former is necessary because "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Rm 10:17). The latter is also crucial because people learn about being Christian in much the same way as they learn their own culture, learning formally through instruction, but mostly informally by seeing true faith modeled by people whom they identify and relate. She cites Jesus' relationship with His disciples as an example of teaching through instruction and lifestyle modeling: He lived with them, taught them, and His prayer life provoked the disciples to ask, "Lord, teach us to pray."[75] Similarly, Hammett considers the relational dimension crucial for nurturing adult learners in today's society of mobile people or 'lonely generation,' and proposes building into the education endeavor the practice of mentoring.[76] Such a practice helps to develop support and accountability relationships through the faith community, thus enabling adult learners to generate the desire and energy to live in obedience to the demands of God's Word.[77]

Smith likens the church to an extended family community in which each person becomes a mirror that reflects a value system similar to that of the nuclear family, and sees the family and the church as the biblical model for the context of education.[78] Since learning, often more "caught" than "taught," takes place over a long period of time, during which learners are exposed to new and conflicting ideas and values in a safe atmosphere where they can reflect and wrestle with them.[79] He cites as an illustration the old farming family model from his youth when he would not "buy in" to his parents' desire to make an affective commitment. He would go up the

[74] Jackie L. Smallbones. "Educating People to be Christian." Christian Education Journal 10 (Winter 1990): 61-62.
[75] Ibid.: 62.
[76] Edward H. Hammett. "Updating Adult Christian Education in Today's Southern Baptist Convention Church." Christian Education Journal 13 (Winter 1993): 22.
[77] Ibid.: 17.
[78] William A. Smith. "The Church's Role in Teaching." in The Teaching Ministry of the Church: Integrating Biblical Truth with Contemporary Application. ed. Daryl Eldridge (Nashville: Boradman & Holman Publishers. 1995). 100. 103.
[79] Ibid. 99-100.

road to his grandfather's farm and hear the instruction again from another perspective, from someone he loved and trusted. He could eventually make a commitment that was his own, but only after he had come to a place where it was safe to raise questions and wrestle with conflicting ideas and values. As Gorman well summarizes, "it is the community...that forms the network of relatedness and support for security in risking transformation," and that "we don't know the reality of love...or trust apart from community."[50]

While the whole church community is the larger context within which Christian education programs function, the smaller units within it must be set up in a way that participants are motivated and empowered to take action toward making life changes to be conform to the image of Christ, which is the goal of Christian education. The smaller units or the main educational structures for nurturing Christian growth in most Chinese American churches are the fellowship and the Sunday school programs, and they are usually run independently. But in order to make a concerted effort to nurture growth, more communication and coordination between the two, e.g. common themes during the same month or quarter, must be made. It may even be helpful to have the same groupings of persons by their respective life stages[51] in the two programs, so that similar needs and issues can be addressed, and trust and accountability among participants enhanced. For larger churches, sub-grouping by locality enhances mutual support beyond the classroom setting. For these reasons, frequent changes in grouping or regrouping persons, e.g. quarterly regrouping based on the Sunday school quarter system, is not advisable.

Within the Sunday school setting, in which most Bible studies, including the sample lessons in this resource, is intended to be conducted, ample opportunities must be provided for sharing and reflection on life experiences among its members, so that the affective aspect of learning can take place.[52] In other words, community of change must be established, which requires continuous dialogue and mutual support of the changes they see each striving to make.

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[50] Julie Gorman. "Christian Formation," Christian Education Journal 10 (Winter 1990): 69.
[51] An example would be for all adults whose oldest children are teenagers to be in the same group.
[52] See Chapter 4 for a more thorough discussion on cognitive and affective learning.

Occasionally, depending on the theme and the nature of the issue addressed, action projects can be organized either among class members, as a whole adult Sunday school department, or in cooperation with other departments or fellowship programs, to live out the biblical demands on disciples and community of believers.

Make a Realistic Assessment (B-Worksheet #4k)

As much as Christian educators are eager to see life changes in terms of concrete actions in applying the biblical message, some prerequisites must be met. Most basic of all is for persons to be aware that a specific area of their lives, either in thinking, in attitude or in behavior, is not meeting Scripture's standard. The second step is for persons to see the importance for a change to take place, and be willing and ready to take at least a small step toward the right direction compatible with that standard. Finally, appropriate resources must be available to guide and support them in taking one step at a time toward life transformation, and be held accountable for such changes. To be realistic, an assessment of their present condition is necessary before suggestions can be made to motivate and guide them toward the next step. The following is an attempt to make that assessment for the four issues addressed in this chapter.

Academic and Economic Achievements. Since such pursuits and achievements are so deep-rooted in the Chinese American value system, and considered legitimate blessings from the Lord, there seems to be little awareness of their pitfalls as discussed in the previous section. Although occasional sermons, books and Bible studies on greed and complacency, and parenting workshops covering academic pressure do help to raise the awareness in a general way, but in order for a concerted effort to be made to address the issue, Christian educators and pastors must first be convicted of their importance and urgency. It is hoped that this resource, along with workshop discussions will serve to challenge them to reflect on the value system and the spiritual issues involved and its detrimental effects on Chinese Americans. Then, perhaps they are ready to guide their communities to do the same.

Discrimination. While Chinese Americans are well aware of all forms of racial discrimination against them from the society at large, they are not aware of their own against

others. The Christian educator must help them apply the all-too-familiar message of Genesis 1:27, that they may come to see their sinful attitude and practice of elitism. They must also be challenged to take seriously the prophetic messages, drawing application from which to address the issue of God's righteous character and His defense for the disadvantaged, who are often victims of discrimination.

In terms of discriminations the American society holds against them, they, especially the new immigrants, tend to be very passive due to both their cultural value of "seeking peace at all cost" and the perceived lack of options living in a foreign country. Therefore, it is difficult for changes to be made in a short time. But what the church can do besides providing a supportive community in which they can feel free to share their hurts and anger and to pray for healing, is to inform them of their rights in the American society and to encourage them to exercise them. When they have experienced help and empowerment from such a supportive community, perhaps together, they will be ready to stand up and fight unjust systems and practices in society.

The issue of discrimination against women is perhaps the toughest to deal with, one of the major reasons being that changes in the positive direction for women means letting go of privileges on the part of men. At this point, there seems to be two feasible approaches: sound biblical teaching and leadership development. Women who are well trained in biblical interpretation must take up the courage to research, exegete, write and speak up to challenge traditional views and practices. This is not just an appeal to the people's cognitive level, it is also an important way for women to gain respect, since Chinese Americans have high regards for both biblical authority and intellectual ability. Another approach is to discover and develop the gifts of women to take leadership, not only in the kitchen and the nursery, but also in all aspects of church ministry. Being a practical people, this approach will demonstrate to them the wisdom of the biblical principle of the priesthood of all believers.

Intergenerational Conflicts.   Judging from the popularity of books purchased and seminars offered on the topic of parenting and family relationships, this is the one area most Chinese Americans are aware that improvements are needed. Most of them are willing and ready

to make necessary changes, and some have already made good progress. But since the problem persists for others despite the efforts, Christian educators and pastors must not only continue to provide resources such as quality books, Bible studies, marriage and family seminars, etc., bi-cultural parenting workshops that deal with cultural differences that account for their conflicts, and relational or communication skills to resolve them must be provided. People must also be challenged and trained to discern whether or not the voice of culture is consistent with the voice of Scripture, and work toward changing attitude and behavior according to the latter when the two are in conflict. Finally, their concept of ownership and development of their children must be challenged, extreme forms of control must be let go, and be guided toward developing their own as well as their children's spiritual walk with the Lord.

Poverty and Social Injustice.   Initiating compassion ministry in the Chinese American Christian community is a delicate matter. One of their major resistances is the association of social concern with the "social gospel" approach employed by the "liberal" churches that are declining in the last thirty years, while the evangelical churches have grown during the same period.[13] But since they have high regard for the authority of Scripture, they must be led to the conviction that compassion ministry is a biblical imperative. Another factor for their resistance is the lack of information and experience; hence they must be supplied with factual data regarding the urgent need of the poor and needy, the injustices they are suffering and the economic gap between them and the rich.

Then, depending on the available resources of the local churches and the local needs in the community, Chinese American churches may be challenged to organize their own service programs such as English and tutorial classes, senior centers, day care and social services for new immigrants, etc. Or they may work in partnership with their denominations' mercy ministries, the Organization of Chinese Americans, government or social agencies to bring about changes in society. Some of the poverty related causes they can be encouraged to advocate may include:

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[13] Fong, 171ff.

exposure of snakeheads' exploitation of the poor aliens; demand for living wages for the low-skill works in urban centers and Chinatowns, etc. They must be reminded that the Christians' mission to proclaim the good news of Christ's salvation to the world must be accompanied by the power of the Kingdom of God, as expressed in acts of love and compassion toward those who are poor, lowly and oppressed. The Christian educator must be sensitive in guiding them to selectively initiate or participate in these ministries based on the available resources, local needs and their own personal conviction.

Relate the Biblical Message to Life (B-Worksheet #4)

According to Osborne in his book The Hermeneutical Spiral, the process from the interpretation of the text to its application involves three steps.[54] The first is to determine the situation behind the biblical text, so that the author's intention or purpose for writing can be discovered. The second is to delineate the underlying theological principle that is relevant to the lives of both the past and the present readers, which serves as a principalizing bridge between interpretation and application. The third is to search for parallel situations in the current life of the learners, which requires an analysis of their life situation or experience.

In Chapter 2, the situation behind the biblical text has been determined by means of contextual analyses, resulting in the identification of the theological theme and message for each sample passage, which in turn serves as the principalizing bridge between interpretation and application. In this chapter, an analysis of the life situation or experience of the Chinese American learners in light of the goal of Christian education has been presented above. The remaining task to be addressed in this section is to identify situations in the current life of the learners that are parallel to those of the sample passages, so that the relevance of the biblical messages may be conveyed, and a lesson goal for each of the three Bible lessons may be proposed for specific application. The actual "how to" of the application process will be dealt with in Chapter 4, after the various learning activities have been explored.

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[54] Osborne, 345–46.

Apply Sample Message #1: Consequences of Unresolved Family Conflicts

The theological theme and message identified in Chapter 2 is that personal sins and unresolved family conflicts result not only in personal tragedies, but they also lead to corporate consequences that have detrimental effects for the kingdom of God. *(B-Worksheet #4m)*

Parallel Life Situations. As David welcomed the opportunity not to confront his son in battle, but entrusted the task to his loyal commanders and troops, Chinese Americans have the same tendency to avoid confrontation when conflicts with their youths arise, but entrust the task of discipline to church counselors and teachers. This is especially true when their children are American born, and meaningful communication between them have not been established due to language and cultural barriers. Just as Absalom was entitled to royal privileges without the accompanying responsibilities, most Chinese American parents, being economically affluent and eager to bribe their children for good grades, often supply material goods over and above their basic needs, yet without training them to take responsibilities. Moreover, with parental negligence in character building, either due to busy lifestyle or lack of positive role modeling, tragedies such as rebellious, luxurious or immoral lifestyle, college drop out, mismanagement of time and money, irresponsible driving leading to car accidents, etc. may occur for some of these children. When these happen, they bring about much grief and guilt feelings in their parents, paralyzing them emotionally and thus affecting their performance at home, at church and for some, even at work. If such situations become prevalent among Christians families, the corporate testimony of the church in the world will be greatly damaged.

Lesson Goal. Learners will realize the detrimental consequences of unresolved family conflicts, and be willing to examine their own contribution to those existing in their lives and take a step toward resolution by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Apply Sample Message #2: What Are Your Pursuits in Life?

The theological theme and message discovered in chapter 2 is that an honest reflection on the inevitable reality of death and the uncertainties in life reflects that all earthly pursuits are futile, but that it is best to enjoy the fruit of one's labor in the context of human relationships as a

portion from the hand of God for this life time. *(B-Worksheet #4n)*

Parallel Life Situations. Not unlike king Solomon, the pursuits of most Chinese American adults include wisdom, work and wealth. As wisdom gives people the ability and resources to get ahead in society, that would mean for the Chinese Americans to provide their children with the best education, and impose a high standard of academic achievement on them. This has become an issue of greatest concern in most families, around which all other pursuits evolve, even at the sacrifice of human relationships. In order for their children's education to be successful, they must pay the highest cost to live in the best school district, and strive to excel in their careers so as to ensure promotions and the highest possible salaries, or they may engage in multiple jobs and/or stock market investments to increase their sources of income. Such pursuits often lead to workaholic tendencies, greed and discontentment to the neglect of faith and character development as well as family relationships. While the adult generation takes pride in financial planning and accumulation of wealth to pass on to the next generation to help them get ahead in society, the younger generation take material blessings for granted as their entitlement instead of seeing them as the fruit of their parents' labor. Most parents are aware of such a tendency in their children, but are not willing to see it as a problem they have helped to create.

As Chinese American adults are so preoccupied with their various pursuits in life that they hardly stop and reflect on the inevitable reality of death, the uncertainties of life, and the impact such pursuits have on their lives and on the lives of their loved ones. They must be given an opportunity to do so in the application of this lesson. It would also be important to bring them into contact with people whose pursuits in life have been changed as a result of such a serious reflection on death and on the uncertainties in life. They must also be guided to make a decision for change in their pursuits, or take a small step in that direction.

Lesson Goal. Learners will reflect and evaluate the values they place on the pursuits of academic and work achievement from the perspective of the inevitable reality of death and the uncertainties of life, and accept the fruit of their labor in the context of human relationships as a portion given by God for their enjoyment in this lifetime.

Apply Sample Message #3: Living in the Presence of a Holy God

The theological theme and message discovered in Chapter 2 is that the holy God desires justice and righteousness in His people, but finds instead human arrogance and social injustice, which violate His Word by offending both their sovereign Lord and their lowly neighbors; thus account for His righteous anger and punishment. *(B-Worksheet #4o)*

Parallel Life Situations. Just as Israel had sinned against their sovereign God by being arrogant and against their lowly neighbors by unjust practices in society, the Chinese Americans Christians are having the same problem. It is not that they consciously disobey the Lord's Word, but much like the Israelites, they are so preoccupied with and have so justified their pursuits that they have become totally insensitive to the needs of their lowly neighbors and to the demands of a Holy God who is a champion for the poor and lowly. For example, few Chinese Americans are aware that by jetting up the real estate prices in the best school district by the common practice of offering to buy homes at a higher than market value, they have disposed their less wealthy neighbors (not necessarily poor by the American standard) to the academically "less desirable" neighborhoods, because the latter simply cannot afford to live there anymore. Certainly, Chinese Americans do not perceive that as injustice. After all, they are paying for what they get!

While no longer threatened by judgment, the Chinese American Christians must be brought to the awareness and be challenged of their sins of human arrogance and social injustice. Although a part of their community consensus, such sins have undoubtedly brought about much pain, disappointment and anger of the Holy God. They must be led, passively to repentance of their sins and actively to the conviction of God's compassion for the poor and lowly, and become an instrument of that compassion toward their neighbors.

Lesson Goal. Learners will reflect on their sins of human arrogance and social injustice that have brought about much pain, disappointment and anger of the Holy God, and be challenged to repent and to live out God's compassion in their community.

CHAPTER 4

Teaching the Bible Lesson

Introduction

Having trained Bible teachers to interpret the biblical texts by the literary genre approach and to apply the biblical message to the lives of contemporary Chinese American learners, the final task for increasing their effectiveness is to prepare them for the actual teaching of the Bible lesson, which aims at impacting the learners' lives beyond the classroom setting. As will be evident from the discussion in the first section of this chapter, learners are active agents of their own learning, so teaching must be understood and carried out in accordance with how learning takes place in them. Hence, the first concern of this chapter is to examine some of the educational theories of learning. Then the effective use of a variety of teaching methods in light of these theories will be explored. Finally, a design of the teaching/learning process to achieve educational goals will be proposed, culminating in the presentation of the three sample lesson plans at the end of the chapter.

Examine Educational Theories of Learning

Traditionally, the learner is seen as a passive recipient of an authoritative divine message,[1] and the Holy Spirit rather than the teacher or the learner is believed to have full control over the inner attitude and life changes of the learner.[2] However, such a position is not totally compatible with biblical and educational concepts of learning. The way that learning takes place in learners as described in the Bible involves a cooperative effort of the Divine and the human teachers, and the learners. On the one hand, the Bible affirms that the Holy Spirit guides learners into all truth (Jn 16:13), without Whom no one can understand spiritual matters (1 Cor 2:10ff). On the other hand, it also testifies to the human teacher's awesome responsibility in admonishing and teaching with all wisdom, so that individual learners may be presented perfect in Christ (Col

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[1] Harold Burgess, Models of Religious Education: Theory and Practice in Historical and Contemporary Perspective (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1996), 180.

[2] Lois E. LeBar, with James Plueddemann, Education That is Christian (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1989), 59.

1:28). However, learners cannot be seen as passive recipients of the divine message. Actively,

new Christians are urged to depart from elementary teachings of Christ and press on to maturity

(Heb 6.1), which implies that they must make effort to grow toward maturity. Passively, the Holy

Spirit warns God's people not to harden their own hearts when hearing God's voice (Heb 3:7-8).

This implies that not even the Divine teacher can impose learning on the learners without their

cooperation! The Master Teacher Jesus Himself teaches that His disciples must listen and accept,

anticipate and appropriate the Word of God if they are to bear fruit in their lives (Mk 4:20, 24).

Educational theories of learning not only affirm the biblical concept of the learners being active

agents of their own learning, they even suggest that how learning takes place in learners

determines how teachers should teach them. The following section will explore four such

educational theories that provide the bases for the use of various teaching methods, and for

designing the teaching/ learning process.

Andragogy

Andragogy is an important theory of adult learning originally proposed by Knowles. It is

summarized by Johnson as presented below,[3] with additional comments from other contemporary

educators. Knowles differentiates andragogy from pedagogy by identifying at least four

characteristics in adult learners. First, they desire to know the reasons why they need to learn

before they commit themselves to an educational experience. Second, they are self-directed, able

to determine their perceived needs, and thus responsible for their own decisions in learning.

Third, they bring a diversity of experience to the classroom. And fourth, they desire to interpret

and confront their real life circumstances.

Christian educators have proposed strategies in the light of these characteristics. Lessons

must be orientated toward the learners' felt needs, so as to give them a reason to listen, and be

challenged for a life response.[4] Due to their self-directedness, they must be given a sense of

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[3] Kent L. Johnson and Nelson T. Strobert, "Principles of Adult Learning," in Lifelong Learning: A Guide to Adult Education in the Church, ed. Rebecca Grothe (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1997), 63-64, 68.

[4] Skip Lewis, "Andragogy in the Sunday School," Christian Education Journal 12 (Spring 1992): 175.

choice in learning,[5] and be provided resources for further investigation.[6] Their diversity of experiences calls for the teacher to acknowledge their uniqueness and abilities on the one hand, and to challenge them to consider alternative perspectives on the other.[7] Learning can be made relevant by promoting courses in problem-centered forms and organizing contents around their needs and interests,[8] as well as by grouping learners according to their developmental stages and selecting Bible passages that are conducive to real life confrontation in their respective stages.[9]

While andragogy assumptions certainly help teachers to be sensitive to motivating factors in planning for adult learning experiences, concerns have also been raised over their tendency to inspire strong individualism. Just as the apostle Paul encourages the exercise of spiritual gifts, but to do so for the building up of the church body (1 Cor 14:26), the teacher must facilitate a delicate balance between affirming learners to achieve their full potential and helping them see themselves as members of the faith community. Another concern as raised by Stephen Brookfield, professor of adult education at Columbia University, is the overestimation of the adult self-directedness.[10] Instead of being self-directed, past negative school experiences and a conditioned perception of students as dependent receivers of transmitted content have caused many adult learners to develop a passive attitude toward learning.[11] Therefore, the teacher must be patient in moving learners toward self-direction. *(B-Worksheet #5a)*

Praxis[12]

A powerful theory of learning for causing change in resistive practice to take place is that of praxis, "a dialectical relationship between theory and practice such that theory springs from practice and constantly returns to it." It implies a constant dialectic between action and reflection.

[5] Johnson and Strobert, 76.
[6] Lewis, 168.
[7] Ibid., 171.
[8] Brad E. Strych, "Increasing Learner Motivation in Adult Classes," Christian Education Journal 14 (Autumn 1993), 51.
[9] Lewis, 173.
[10] Ibid., 167.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Miller, 273-75.

As Miller cites Paulo Freire, a leading proponent of this theory, as seeing praxis to begin not simply with personal practice and reflection, but with community patterns that he calls life themes, one of which is oppression. As learners examine their practices critically, they may become aware of themselves as oppressed or oppressors. Until then, they would not be ready for change.

Proverbs 4:23, "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well spring of life," urges people to make every effort to guard their hearts against evil motives. for it is out of the inner motives of the heart that outward actions flow. However, as Proverbs 16:2, "All a person's ways seem innocent to the person, but motives are weighed by the Lord" implies, self-deception and rationalization often blind people from realizing the evil motives behind their actions, which only the Lord sees through. Therefore, learners must be guided to search their inner motives behind outward actions in light of God's Word, so that by enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, they can be convicted of evil motives and be ready for change. Such examining of actions is crucial, for ultimately it is upon actions (with their accompanying motives), and not just upon words that a person is judged (Mt 7:21 and Jas 2:17). Therefore, praxis is an important theory of learning that has significant implications for Christian education. *(B-Worksheet #5b)*

Learning Styles[13]

Another one of the important learning theories originally proposed by Kolb in 1971 and developed in recent decades is that of learning styles. According to this theory. in perceiving knowledge. there are people who sense and feel their way concretely (FEEL) and those who think things through abstractly (THINK); and in processing information. there are people who watch what is happening reflectively (WATCH) and those who jump right in and try it out actively (DO). The rest belong somewhere on the continuum between the two sets of extremes in perceiving and in processing. Kolb theorizes that the combination of how people perceive

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[13] Bernice McCarthy. The 4MAT System: Teaching to Learning Styles with Right/Left Mode Techniques. ed. Charles White and Mary Colgan McNamara. rev. ed. (Barrington. Ill.: EXCEL. 1987). 3. 9. 25. 33-43.

(concretely or abstractly) and process (reflectively or actively) forms the uniqueness of four basic learning styles, the most comfortable way to learn. McCarthy applies the theory and demonstrates how teaching can be done in accordance with the four learning styles.

The imaginative learners (FEEL and WATCH) seek personal meaning, judge things in relationship to values, function through social interaction, want to make the world a better place, are cooperative and sociable, and respect authority when earned. Since they learn by listening and sharing ideas, they enjoy discussions, group work, and prefer teachers who encourage growth and authenticity in them.

The analytic learners (THINK and WATCH) seek intellectual competence, judge things by factual verification, function by adapting to experts, want to add to the world's knowledge, are patient and reflective, and prefer chain-of-command authority. Since they learn by thinking and then reflecting about ideas, they enjoy the traditional classroom lecture, and prefer teachers who are experts and interested in transmitting knowledge.

The common sense learners (THINK and DO) seek solutions to problems, judge things by their usefulness, function through kinesthetic awareness, want to make things happen, are practical and straightforward, see authority as necessary, but would work around it if forced. Since they learn by testing theories and applying common sense, they enjoy problem solving on their own, and prefer teachers who give them the skills they need to be independent learners.

The dynamic learners (FEEL and DO) seek hidden possibilities, judge things by gut reactions, function by synthesizing various parts, want to challenge complacency, are enthusiastic and adventurous, and tend to disregard authority. Since they learn by trial and error, they enjoy self-discovery and creative works, and prefer stimulating teachers who use a variety of teaching methods.

Recognizing that the individual learners are uniquely made in the image of God, Christian educators must respect the different learning styles as God's wonderful creation, and make every effort to use various teaching methods to enhance understanding and application of God's truth among learners. The apostle Paul affirms such accommodation of every learner, as he

says, "And we proclaim Him, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ" (Col 1:28). In doing so, all learners will feel appreciated and valued for their uniqueness. Each one will have a chance to use his/her own natural ability to learn, while at the same time be developed in ways others learn as well, so that all learners will learn from each other and grow together in the process. *(B-Worksheet #5c)*

Principles of Learning/Teaching (based on Bloom's Taxonomy)

An important educational theory, developed by Bloom and well accepted by educators since the latter half of the 20th century, recognizes learning as involving two different domains: the cognitive and the affective, each with its own hierarchical levels of learning. Ford applies Bloom's theory and has developed his principles of teaching/learning in both domains.[14]

The Cognitive Domain. Defined as "those learning objectives which deal with the recall or recognition of knowledge and the development of intellectual abilities and skills,"[15] the cognitive domain consists of six levels of learning: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.

As generally recognized by educators, people tend to take in new information on the basis of the storehouse of knowledge they already possess.[16] Therefore, while factual knowledge is at the lowest level of cognitive learning, it is the foundation upon which higher levels of learning may be built. Ford has developed the following six principles of teaching for designing learning activities that aim at factual knowledge outcomes, as summarized below:[17] Provide learning activities that:

1. require learners to participate actively.

2. require learners to use more than one of the senses at the same time.

3. help learners see in advance the total organization pattern.

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[14] LeRoy Ford. Design for Teaching and Training (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1978).

[15] Krathwohl, David R., Benjamin S. Bloom and Bertram B. Masia. Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain (New York: David McKay, 1956). Cited by Ford, 7.

[16] Richard Robert Osmer. Teaching for Faith: A Guide for Teachers of Adult Classes (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 40.

[17] Ford, 118ff.

4. give learners immediate knowledge of results.

5. are novel to the learners.

6. are various but each aiming at achieving the same goal. *(B-Worksheet #5d)*

His principles of teaching corresponding to the other five higher levels of learning are summarized as follows:[18] Provide learning activities for learners to...

Comprehension:	translate ideas into new forms.
	discover relationships between one idea and another.
	define and interpret ideas and concepts.
Application:	use the information in new and practical ways.
Analysis:	break material down into its parts.
	solve problems in a systematic way.
Synthesis:	combine elements/parts to form a new and creative product.
Evaluation:	judge the value or worth of something, based on given standards.

(B-Worksheet #5e)

The Affective Domain. Defined as "objectives which describe changes in interests, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment,"[19] the affective domain consists of five levels of learning: Receiving, Responding, Valuing, Organization and Characterization.

Ford's principles of teaching for attitudinal outcomes have been rearranged, with a few additions (marked*), to better correspond to the five levels of learning in the affective domain, as well as to account for the work of the Holy Spirit in affecting attitude change in learners. A couple of his principles of teaching in the motor skill area have also been adapted (marked**) to help learners take action toward characterization. The modified principles of teaching in the affective domain are summarized as follows:[20] Provide opportunities for learners to...

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[18] Ibid., 160, 163, 195.

[19] Krathwohl, David R., Benjamin S. Bloom and Bertram B. Masia. Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: Cognitive Domain (New York: David McKay, 1964). Cited by Ford, 181.

[20] Ibid., 225, 242, 292.

Receiving:	*pay attention to a learning activity.
Responding:	identify an attitude and specify what it means.
	read or hear about persons who exemplify the attitude.
	confront sources that they consider authoritative.
	observe leaders and peers who exemplify the attitude.
	engage in meaningful emotional experiences.
Valuing:	reflect upon their own life experiences in light of Scripture.
	analyze values, and make decisions on moral/ethical issues.
	share insights or commitments with others in a climate of freedom.
	*allow for the Holy Spirit to change their attitude and values.
Organization:	*prioritize their values.
Characterization:	**see a demonstration of actions (of the proper attitude).
	**receive guidance in their first attempts in taking action.
	*allow for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to change life.
	**take action in real life on their own, repeatedly if necessary.
	*build accountability by reporting back results soon after action taken.

The above addition of providing opportunities for learners to allow for the Holy Spirit to change attitude and behavior is crucial, because the Scriptures affirm that the Holy Spirit, Who indwells the children of God when they accept Christ (Gal 4:6), enables them to die to sin and to live by Him (8:11ff), and empowers them to witness and to do even greater works than Christ had done (Acts 1:8, 10:38; Jn 14:12ff). Therefore, time and opportunity must be provided for learners to draw upon His power for living through meditation and prayer during class session, and through assignments during the week beyond the classroom setting. But as Christians develop at different paces and in different ways, and only the Lord who searches the hearts knows their inner attitudes, the instructor cannot be dogmatic about prescribing changes for the whole class. In designing learner response activities, s/he must leave room for the Holy Spirit to move within the individual learners and bring about various levels and kinds of changes in them (see Reflection

and Action of Sample Lesson Plan #2). *(B-Worksheet #5f)*

Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, Bloom's Taxonomy as applied by Ford is helpful to the teacher in designing learning activities to achieve goals and objectives in both domains, assessing the merits of different teaching methods, and evaluating the learners' achievement throughout the educative process. However, the theory cannot be taken rigidly. The two domains can be more accurately seen as integrated when learning takes place in the learner. For example, it is hard to perceive a learner achieving any level of cognitive learning without responding affectively at the same time; or anyone reaching the level of lifestyle characterization in loving one's neighbor without having cognitive knowledge of what that means. Besides, when learning style is taken into consideration, the levels may not be in the stated sequence. For example, a dynamic learner may find synthesis at a lower level than analysis, and a common sense learner may find application lower than comprehension, or evaluation lower than synthesis, etc. With these qualifications, Bloom's theory as applied by Ford in his principles of teaching is helpful in providing general guidelines for designing the teaching/learning process, as will be demonstrated in the last section of this chapter.

Explore a Variety of Teaching Methods

As evident from the above discussion on educational theories of learning, employing a variety of teaching methods is essential for learning to be effective. Andragogy calls for the sharing of life experiences and self-directed type of a learning process for adults. Praxis highlights the need for teaching methods that require critical self- or community-reflection on the learners' actions and practices. The theory of Learning styles requires the use of a variety of teaching methods to make learning effective for all types of learners. And principles of teaching derived from Bloom's Taxonomy most concretely spell out how various teaching/learning activities can be employed to achieve educational goals in both the cognitive and the affective domains. Therefore, in this section, some of the most common teaching methods and their effective use by contemporary educators are explored.

Lecture

The purpose of the lecture is not just to summarize resource materials used for teaching, but to present ideas in a manner tailored to the needs of the learners, beginning with what they know and taking them to a new destination. Even though it is often taken for granted as the primary teaching method for transmitting cognitive biblical knowledge, intentionally planned such as including impact statements and stories, it can bring about a change of attitude as well.

The Teacher's Preparation.[21]

1. Write An Idea Outline: Investigate the subject matter by reading, while highlighting important ideas. Then decide on the points to be covered, based on a balance between what the teacher considers the most important for the learners and on what s/he personally cares about the most, so s/he can lecture with conviction.

2. Write A Presentation Outline: consisting of a skeleton of the basic points and sub-points to be covered. Choose an overall principle to organize and outline the lecture. For example, begin with a problem and move toward its solution; state one side and the opposite side of an issue, then a possible resolution; set forth an idea and move toward its application in life; present events or ideas in their historical sequence; begin with a familiar idea or experience, then examine it critically, making it unfamiliar; etc.

3. Add examples: two types—cognitive and affective: the former aims at clarifying ideas and concepts while the latter aims at arousing feelings and commitments. To illustrate cognitive ideas or concepts, familiar analogies may be used. To affect attitude, life examples or emotional experiences from authority figures, leaders and peers are valuable. They need not always be positive experiences; small progresses after failures, reflections and prayers are sometimes more realistic and helpful than success stories.

4. Repeated practice for lecture delivery is usually not necessary, but may talk through the introduction, conclusion and summary, and ask again and again why s/he cares about this

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[21] Summarized from Osmer, 47-52, 61-68.

lecture, so that the teacher's interest and conviction may come through, and spark the same in the learners.

Guidelines for Effective Use. Osmer's guidelines for the delivery of the four basic parts to a lecture: introduction, body, periodic summaries and conclusion are summarized below (unless noted otherwise):[22]

The purpose of the introduction is threefold. First, get attention by stimulating curiosity, creating an expectation, fostering tension, etc. Second, make connections to the learners by telling stories or life examples that relate to the topic. Third, set in motion the flow of the lecture according to the organizing principle. For example, if the lecture is organized in terms of a question-to-answer flow, the introduction would present the question, which the rest of the lecture attempts to answer.

The body builds on the introduction, and follows the pattern set by the organizing principle. Allow spontaneity during delivery with the help of a presentation outline, bearing in mind the learners' attention span, which increases for the first ten minutes and then begins to fall off. For example, after explaining an idea for about ten minutes, shift to a story or illustration: ask a question or pause for questions. For transmission of content material to be effective, Ford's principles of teaching for knowledge outcomes, such as helping learners see in advance the total organization pattern, may be applied.

Periodic summaries give learners a chance to rest briefly, allowing them to catch up if attention has wandered off, or to correct misunderstandings of the material just covered if necessary. It also serves as a signal that one part is completed and another will begin.

The conclusion provides learners with the sense that the lecture has reached a destination, which can create a strong and long-lasting impression, or that it has only scratched the surface of the subject. This may be done by giving a culminating insight, a summary, or an invitation for learners to share application to their lives. *(B-Worksheet #5g)*

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[22] Osmer, 53-61.

Discussion[23]

The discussion method, involving the relational give and take kind of genuine conversation between teacher and learners and among learners, is often used either as a primary or supplementary means of instruction. Osmer differentiates two types of discussion: the focused and the open-ended. In the former, a pre-determined goal is set by the teacher, which often serves to help learners understand content material. In the latter, the flow of the discussion emerges out of the sharing in class without a pre-determined goal set by the teacher. Habermas describes it as dialogical education, and considers it contributive to strengthening the traditional lecture in the sense that learner feedback typifies the very heart of living and learning outside the classrooms, and that through two-way communication, "concepts are clarified, values are affirmed...."[24]

For both focused discussion and open-ended discussion, the questioning technique is essential. As Fortosis observes: high rates of questioning with questions of various cognitive levels and sufficient pauses in between promote cognitive performance; the use of questions and discussion stimulates positive attitudes toward most topics; and learner and teacher generated questions are likely to engage learners at an intellectually challenging level.[25]

The Teacher's Role and Preparation. The two types of discussion require different roles and preparations on the part of the teacher. In the focused discussion, since the teacher has a clear idea of where s/he wants the discussion to go, s/he attempts to move the learners toward the pre-determined goal s/he has set for the class. Its preparation is similar to that of a lecture, except that after selecting the central points of the presentation outline, the next step is to turn that outline into a discussion outline consisting of questions corresponding to each point on the outline. This outline then guides the flow of the discussion to arrive at conclusions intended by the teacher.

The open-ended discussion is more spontaneous. The teacher is primarily responsible for

[23] Ibid. 75-93. unless noted otherwise.

[24] Ronald T. Habermas. "An Examination of Teaching Paradigms: Three Dialogical Approaches Which Strengthen Traditional Andragogical Practice." Christian Education Journal 10 (Winter 1990): 48.

[25] Stephen G. Fortosis. "Can Questioning Make Religious Educators More Effective in the Classroom?" Christian Education Journal 12 (Spring 1992): 86-90.

raising thought provoking questions to move the class along, deepening the insights as the discussion unfolds, and including as many members of the class as possible. According to Faust, teaching begins with an acceptance and encouragement of the learners' congenial participation. By encouraging expression of resistance, not classifying answers as wrong, and not interrupting the dynamic interaction of class members, the teacher gives permission for learners to come to a more complex and comprehensive view. It is expected that the learners, picking up the dialogue style of the teacher as learners and active listeners, and valuing different opinions, will come to see the inadequacy of some of their beliefs, and accept a modified or synthesized view that makes more sense to them or clears up some of their confusions.[26]

The preparation for the open-ended discussion involves the following:

1. Read and jot down grabbing thoughts and feelings from the reading material.

2. Jot down and reflect on how they relate to life and challenge.

3. Visualize one at a time, how two or three very different learners might be struck by these ideas, and how each will respond.

4. List important ideas and issues that occur during such reflection.

5. Write down how to begin the discussion: personal sharing and invite learners to share along; raise two or three issues and ask why they seem so important; brainstorm about important ideas; ask learners to share feelings stirred by the reading, etc.

Guidelines for Effective Use.   As Osmer holds, "probably the single most important skills involved in leading a discussion is asking good questions."[27] The following is a summary of his proposal for using the four basic types of questions: the factual, analytical, productive, and evaluative (examples mine).[28]

Factual questions require learners to draw out certain knowledge or facts from their memories or from the Bible, so as to build on them to achieve higher levels of learning. They are

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[26] Wayne E. Faust, "A Model for Effective Adult and Adolescent Education in a Relational Mode," Religious Education 93 (Fall 1998): 470.

[27] Osmer, 70.

[28] Ibid., 69-75.

usually the "who," "what," "when" kind of questions that have single right answers immediately accessible to the learners, e.g., "Who killed Absalom?"

Analytical questions require learners to analyze information and draw conclusions from it. They engage learners in an active process of thinking to help them see meanings and relationships that facts alone do not provide. There are usually right answers or a range of possible right answers, e.g., "Why did Joab hesitate to send Ahimaaz to deliver news of Absalom's death to King David?"

Productive questions are open-ended questions that do not have right or wrong answers. Rather, on the basis of the learners' creativity and imagination, they come up with their own unique responses. In other words, they "produce" something that is new, e.g., "What could have been David's reaction if Absalom had been captured alive?"

Evaluative questions require the learners to make value judgments about something either based on their own standard, on those given in class or found in Scripture. They are also open-ended questions that have no right answers, and the learners are challenged to examine both their judgments and the standards they use to make their judgments, e.g., "Do you think David loved Absalom? Why or why not?" "What was Joab's moral responsibility?"

Osmer offers the following suggestions for leading discussions:[29]

Start with questions that are fairly easy and non-threatening, but avoid those that can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no" unless learners are asked to supply reasons. It is advisable to "start slow, go low, strike fire, retire," which means to ease the learners into a discussion, invite them to do some solid thinking and sharing, build toward culminating insights, then quickly tie things together with a conclusion. Sometimes, begin with a dramatic, controversial question that stirs the class up. Then jump right into discussion. For example, "Some people are more likely to confess their racism than sexism. Do you agree? Why or why not?"

Silence is generally much shorter than the teacher thinks. Some research indicates that

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[29] Ibid., 75-83.

teachers wait an average of only one second, but that when they wait from three to five seconds, more answers of better quality are given. If no answer is forthcoming, try to rephrase the question in a simpler form or ask prompting questions to help learners respond. Or lean against a solid object such as a wall or a podium, which gives the impression that one can wait forever. Or make eye contacts with different people and ask, "Can anyone respond?" Or have learners respond to the question with each other first, then volunteer to share with the entire class.

To create an atmosphere conducive to discussion, affirm or appreciate the learners' responses even if wrong, especially in the beginning. Avoid interjecting a mini-lecture unless the discussion can be helped to reach a deeper level. However, speak as a resource person, not the ultimate authority. Ask probing questions to help learners go deeper than their initial response, or redirect the discussion for greater participation, e.g. "What do the rest of you think of this?"

Bring the discussion to a close to create a sense that the discussion has arrived somewhere. This may be achieved by having someone offer a summary, or by having each or some learners share one of the most significant insights gained. *(B-Worksheet #5h)*

Debate[30] (Notes* and examples mine)

The debate, a formal argument between two parties taking opposite sides of a specified issue, is generally stated in the form of a resolution, e.g., "When we experience racial discrimination from our boss at work, we should confront him/her about it." The party that argues for the affirmative has the responsibility to prove that the resolution is correct. The other party has to prove that it is not, and may offer an alternate proposal.

The Teacher's Role.   (Note*: The teacher is responsible to assign for debate an issue relevant to the Bible lesson and possibly has biblical support on both sides. S/he may serve as moderator of the debate, help direct comments and questions from the floor when it is open after the last rebuttal, and guide in the process of deciding a winner.)

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[30] Marlene D. LeFever. Creative Teaching Methods: Be An Effective Christian Teacher (Elgin, Ill.: David C. Cook Publishing, 1985), 232-33.

<u>Guidelines for Effective Use</u>. Debate speeches are to be given in two sessions of four presentation speeches each, with a brief break in between when each side prepares for its rebuttal. Generally, the order of the presentation is as follows:

1.	First affirmative speech	2.	First negative speech
3.	Second affirmative speech	4.	Second negative speech

Break

5.	First negative rebuttal	6.	First affirmative rebuttal
7.	Second negative rebuttal	8.	Second affirmative rebuttal

Since the burden of proof lies with the affirmative party, its members have the advantage of presenting the first and last speeches. After the last rebuttal, the floor may be open for class comments and questions. The winning party is determined by its ability to present better arguments than the loosing party. (Note*: by taking votes of the sides class members take before and after the debate, and see which party wins more converts. But if such competitions hurt learners' relationship, the teacher may use the debate as an opportunity to help them look at both sides of an issue without having to pick a winner). *(B-Worksheet #5j)*

Paradox[31]

Often used to teach the mystery of God's kingdom, paradox may be defined as "a statement or an argument that seems self-contradictory when viewed from the perspective of common sense."[32] It may be illustrated by the parable of the Prodigal Son. The assumptions of the audience are: dutiful sons are to be rewarded and slothful sons punished; and responsible fathers must discipline children to teach responsible behavior. But the parable contradicts the logic of such assumptions, and its contradiction can only be overcome by moving to a new frame of reference, in which God's love is not seen along the lines of reward-and-punishment thinking used in everyday life.

<u>The Teacher's Role</u>. The teacher challenges learners to become aware that their

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[31] Osmer, 149-90.
[32] Ibid., 153.

current understanding of God is too small. Two types of teaching are based on this understanding of paradox: reframing and teaching contraries. To teach reframing, the teacher's role is to help learners see that all human knowledge of God is finite and limited, and to invite learners to develop awareness of new frames. In teaching contraries, the teacher's role is to introduce two seemingly contradictory perspectives, then confront learners with the anomalies (that which cannot be explained) of each. In both types of teaching paradox, the teacher helps learners accept Paul's exhortation not to think too highly of themselves but rely on the diversity in the church community to study God's mystery. Thus, such teaching is grounded in a theological concept that can be employed to study other controversial topics as well.

<u>Guidelines for Effective Use</u>.   Osmer offers two different sets of guidelines for an effective use of the two types of teaching paradox: reframing and contraries, as summarized below (illustrations mine).[33]

Teaching reframing involves four steps as follows:

1. Identify the basic assumptions of the learners' current frame of reference by actively listening to what they are saying and how it reveals about their understanding of truth. Articulate their assumptions concretely, using similar language and images as the learners do, such as "so woman is inferior to man due to the order of creation as implied by 1 Tim 2:13." Discern points of dissatisfaction they have with their current frame of reference in comments such as "but it doesn't seem to make sense." Then build on this need (to change frame) for the next stage.

2. Introduce a paradox that challenges the basic assumptions in their current frame of reference, using one of four techniques: reversal, intensification, confusion, and renaming. Reversal introduces a new perspective that portrays some of their assumptions in a radically new way and invites them to compare and contrast it with their initial perspective. For example, compare and contrast the order of creation between animals and humankind with that between man and woman in terms of superiority or inferiority. Intensification focuses so intensely on their

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[33] Ibid., 157-90.

basic assumptions that they must come to terms with it. For example, argue as hard as possible that all second-born are inferior to first-borns, until they get so disgusted that they would be open to alternative interpretations. Confusion tries to get learners to examine their assumptions from a different point of view they are likely to resist, but which is presented in such a confusing manner that they temporarily forget their resistance while trying to clarify it, so that in the process they make sense out of it. For example, explain the hypothetical assumptions of people raised in a matriarchal society, who would interpret the order of creation for Eve as being advantageous over Adam. Renaming provides new words to rename realities as related to their basic assumptions, thus constructing a new frame of reference. For example, rename Eve as the crown of God's creation of humankind, which parallels humankind as the crown of God's creation of the universe.

3. Discover a new frame of reference that makes sense out of the paradox. In each of the techniques above, a paradox has been introduced to challenge certain assumptions of the learners' frame, then they are ready to make sense out of this paradox. For example, they may come to see a new frame in which the order of creation between Adam and Eve may not imply superiority or inferiority in terms of nature, but priority of nurture.

4. Reflect upon this new frame to become aware of its limits and those of all other perspectives. The goal is to help learners go beyond seeing God or reality in a new way, but become aware that every way of viewing God or reality takes place within the constraints of a certain frame, which in this case is the frame of patriarchy.

Teaching contraries involves presenting two different perspectives simultaneously, and then introducing anomalies that are part of each perspective. The goal is not so much to call into question the assumptions of a given frame of reference, as to call into question the adequacy of every frame. The basic steps involved are as follows:

1. Identify two equally valid perspectives such as free will and predestination.

2. Teach both perspectives as equally valid, noting similarities and differences.

3. Point to anomalies in each perspective.

4. Invite learners to acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of each view.

5. Acknowledge the mystery of God and the limitation of all perspectives. *(B-Worksheet #5k)*

<u>Case Study</u>[34]

The case study method focuses on issues that require a response or a decision not just on the part of one or more characters in the case, but also on the part of the learners studying the case as well: their stands and the bases of their decisions. The method aims at facilitating at least three goals: wisdom--the ability to integrate understanding and practice, faith and action; maturity--the ability to make decision guided by faith and taking responsibility for its consequences; and discernment--the intuition and sensitivity to discriminate between alternatives and their implications for a faithful response.

<u>The Teacher's Role and Preparation</u>.   The teacher is a co-learner with the class in analyzing the case and proposing responsible and creative alternatives of understanding and action. His/her role is to foster a meaningful dialogue among the participants, facilitate the discussion, highlight the issues and insights, and employ his/her own resources in the summary and for clarification throughout the process. A gifted teacher listens well, encourages learners to do the same, and genuinely trusts the wisdom, insights, and personal experiences of the class.[35] His/her preparation involves thinking through ahead of time clear questions or additional data. The discussion plan may consist of listing the central issues, the principal characters and their feelings, and theological resources available to both the characters and the participants.

<u>Guidelines for Effective Use</u>.   Initial questions such as "What is the situation in the case?" or "What does the problem seem to be?" provide a wide range of entry points. One way to guide a case study is to record on the board remarks made by a participant, and to interpret and

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[34] Robert A. Evans, "The Case Method and the Ministry to Higher Education," in <u>Case Studies in Higher Education Ministries</u>, ed. Robert A. Evans, Alice Frazer Evans, and Gregg H. Douglas (Newton Centre, Mass.: National Institute for Campus Ministries, 1980).

[35] Alice F. Evans, Robert A. Evans, and William B. Kennedy, <u>Pedagogies for the Non-Poor</u> (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1987), 18.

organize them to show how they relate to other points. The respondent may be probed to clarify what s/he says or means, or to rephrase it. To heighten involvement and to introduce an affective dimension, learners may be asked to assume the roles of the persons in the case. Or ask questions such as: "What would you do if you were the main character in this case? Why?"

Conflict of opinion or controversy is characteristic of and constructive in a lively case discussion. The teacher may highlight the conflict by putting learners in direct dialogue with one another and encourage them to sketch concrete alternative solutions, and then critically compare these alternatives and their consequences. Another way is to call for a vote on a controversial issue, with a category of 'undecided' that provides an opportunity to test the impact of the discussion by taking a second vote later. A decision point may be clarified by pushing learners to decide and to defend their choices.

The study may be closed by asking learners what they have learned from the case and from one another, then listing them on the board as a communal summary. When the teacher has important insights or an integrative way of understanding the case or issue to share, it is important to identify them as his/her concerns rather than the solution. *(B-Worksheet #50)*

Action Reflection[36]

This teaching method moves from action to reflection, thus relating actual practice to reflection of theology. Learners are challenged to genuinely reflect upon their deep-rooted but unbiblical practices, and open themselves to the Holy Spirit's empowerment for transformation of life. But this is not limited to grave social sins, learners must learn to do theological reflection in daily living as well.[37]

The Teacher's Role. It is to bring learners to the awareness that all stations in life: family, relationships, work, leisure, etc., provide experiences for theological reflection and discernment, and to motivate them to change in light of Scripture. S/he must also demonstrate to

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[36] Miller, 286ff. See also Evans, Evans, and Kennedy, 170ff.

[37] Norma Cook Everist and Susan K. Nachtigal, "Making the Connections," in Lifelong Learning: A Guide for Adult Education in the Church, ed. Rebecca Grothe (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1997), 169-72.

them that as their teacher, s/he is doing the same, so that together, they may make progress toward reaching the goal of Christian education, which is to conform to the image of Christ. In other words, her takes the role of a facilitator for creating in the classroom a community of change, in which learners mutually support the changes they see each striving to make.

Guidelines for Effective Use. As proposed by Miller, a paradigm of this method may include awareness, analysis, action and reflection.

Awareness refers to self-consciousness arising from exposing and examining one's own action or community tradition and practice. For example, critically looking at how one treats persons of another race may lead to the awareness of one's own and/or the community's traditional practice of race discrimination. Exposing to other churches' effort in living out the gospel imperative of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and freeing the captives, makes the complacent churches aware of the problem of poverty and injustice in society and their failure to show compassion as God requires.

Analysis leads to further understanding of the problem and the deep-rooted ideology behind it. For example, analyze how the rich educate themselves to continue to be rich, and educate the poor to accept their own poverty as a normal and natural thing. Confront ideological traps such as "they are poor because they are lazy" or that "they are poor because of their own choice," and analyze the cause and effect of such traps.

Action involves conferring and discussing with those already experienced and engaged with the concern. It requires prayer, study (biblical, social/political, intellectual and experiential field works, etc.), and planning for action. For example, interview Paulo Freire concerning pedagogies for the non-poor; engage in Bible study on God's concern for and relationship to the poor; attend a traveling seminar to the Third World; organize a planning and action group in the local church to fight poverty in the community, etc.

Reflection completes the cycle as an evaluation of what is being or has been done to bring about the transformation in life practice, of how well such transformation has met objectives set in the action plans, and of how it can be modified and improved to make a greater

or more lasting impact. *(B-Worksheet #5m)*

Life Story[38]

As Hammett suggests, since Scripture speaks to real life situations and transitions, learners must be encouraged to encounter God at their point of need, to find their stories within the stories of Scripture, and be guided by its message for their daily living.[39] Osmer points out that the reinterpreting of one's own life story is at the heart of teaching for commitment, and it is primarily a matter of bringing together in a meaningful way the stories of Scripture that describe God's dealings with the world culminating in Jesus Christ, and the life stories of the learners.

The Teacher's Role.   It is to help learners deepen their struggle through memory and reflection, and understand it in light of Scripture, so that by receiving the gift of a new story, the various commitments that make up the pattern of their lives will be reshaped.

Guidelines for Effective Use.   Osmer's proposal involves selecting learning activities from the following five basic parts. They correspond to Ford's principles of teaching for attitudinal outcomes: provide learning activities for learners to reflect upon their own life experiences in light of Scripture; analyze their own values; make decisions on moral and ethical issues; and share their insights in a climate of freedom.

1. Remembering: events that make sense of who they are. Outline their autobiography in stages: childhood, adolescent, young adult, and present, supplying a title and an image of God for each stage.

2. Reflecting: how the deeper story of the past impact commitments in the present, which provides the interpretive keys to personal identity narratives. Examples of reflective questions are: What does the title of each stage say about their view of life? What are the marker events that lie behind the choice of the title? How have their images of God changed or continued through the various life stages?

3. Encountering: collision between personal identity narratives and Scripture narratives.

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[38] Osmer, 107-48, unless noted otherwise.
[39] Hammett, 13.

forcing open to learners the in breaking and redirecting of God's Word. The learners may paraphrase Scripture to clarify what it says to their lives today, or write their own parables pertaining to the area of commitment being studied.

4. Sharing: insights or self-disclosure to promote empathy among learners. Leaders in small groups may pose a question on an area of commitment, and let learners share insights, then allow for questions and responses among them. Or learners may take turns to discuss an area of commitment while those who listen later reflect on what they hear.

5. Deciding: on ways for learners to redirect their commitments, with action plans to set in motion a process of change in their lives. Learning activities may include: a. Write out in two scenarios the next chapter five years from now, one if hopes and dreams were fulfilled, the other if unfulfilled; and identify factors that make the difference, discerning those within and those beyond control. b. Learners help each other discern concrete steps to move toward fulfillment of the positive scenario. c. Decide how they are going to live differently in light of the study, naming one or two action plans for the coming week. d. Learners share insights gained and changes they see ahead. *(B-Worksheet #5n)*

Creative Writing[40]

LeFever insightfully points out that discovering one's writing ability gives learners a sense of achievement few other teaching methods can match. Apart from the practical advantage of helping learners prepare for lessons during the week, some of the benefits LeFever listed for writing assignments are as follows.[41] First, it helps learners stabilize in their own minds what they believe, which has lasting value when the writing touches the essence of their relationship with God. Second, they may be challenged to more original thinking as they hear each other express themselves, as well as to appreciate one another's writing skills. Third, it gives clues to the problems and issues vital to their lives, and where they are in their faith journey. And finally, it gives learners a vehicle for communicating truth to others, and very often, their writing preach to

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[40] LeFever, 261-85.
[41] Ibid., 262, 267.

each other in stronger terms than the teacher can do through verbal communication.

The Teacher's Role.[42]   Since many learners are afraid to write because of negative experience of writing school papers in the past, the teacher must find ways to break through those negative feelings in order for learners to discover the joy of creative writing. To take the pressure off learners, begin with small and fun writing assignments that do not appear "schoolish," stress that writing is just "talk written down," and that s/he is not expecting "great writing," only "individual sharing," and offer learners the option to write or think, and then share. However, assure them that they will not be asked to do so unless they volunteer. Most importantly, s/he must not make negative comments about spelling or punctuation, but may give positive reinforcement by posting the best creative writing assignments on a bulletin board after writers have polished them.

Guidelines for Effective Use.   Writing projects may be carried out in class or at home. Although there is often not enough time to do so in class, once learners have begun something they consider worthwhile in class, they will usually complete on their own. Some of the creative writing projects LeFever proposes are: biblical poetry, prayers, paraphrases, letters, and stories. Their respective guidelines for effective use are as follows (examples mine):[43]

1. Biblical Poetry: Following the poetic forms found in the Psalms, give learners the first of poetic lines such as "I will always love my God," and ask them to write its second line for synonymous, antithetic, or synthetic parallelisms, such as "I will praise Him unceasingly," "I will never forsake Him," or "for He is good to me," respectively. Or give them some letters of the alphabet to compose acrostic poems, e.g. A—"All night long I cry out to You, Lord," B— "Because my colleagues are attacking me," C—"Condemning me for things I have not done."

2. Prayers: An immediate and valuable way for learners to respond to God is to write prayers or notes to Him. Encourage them to write sincerely and specifically, and use the same language as they normally talk. For those who do not feel up to writing a specified response, e.g.

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[42] Ibid. 261-62.
[43] Ibid. 270-82.

thanksgiving, provide an alterative, e.g. finish the sentence, "The most valuable lesson I have learned today is...."

3. Paraphrases: Take a portion of Scripture such as the Twenty-third Psalm, and ask learners to rewrite it the way they are living it today, which means rewriting it not only into contemporary language, but also into contemporary setting. What they write will indicate how well they are able to understand and apply its message.

4. Letters: Write to people such as missionary family members, shut-ins, servicemen and women, those away from home for the first time, those grieving the loss of loved ones, those who serve quietly and are seldom appreciated, etc.

5. Stories: Introduce "what if" situations for learners to write or finish writing stories. For example, "What if David had gone to the battle and come face to face with Absalom?" Finish writing the rest of the story. *(B-Worksheet #5o)*

Design the Teaching/Learning Process

Having examined four educational theories of learning that support the use of a variety of teaching methods, the previous section surveys some of the more commonly employed teaching methods. Some of them are more effective for learning in the cognitive domain, e.g. lecture, discussions, etc., while others are geared more toward the affective, e.g. case study, life story, etc. Since both the cognitive and the affective are necessary for learning to be effective, several teaching methods may be employed in a single lesson or in a series of lessons on the same topic, to lead learners from gaining factual knowledge and cognitive understanding of Scripture to reflecting on their own lives, and to taking action beyond the classroom. Apart from addressing the cognitive and the affective aspects of learning, selection of teaching methods must also do justice to the literary genres of the particular biblical texts, which reflect the educational approach the respective biblical authors used to communicate their messages. The final educative process, including the goal of the lesson and the teaching methods or learning activities selected to achieve this goal, is designed by the educator and is generally reflected in the lesson plan.

Therefore, in this last section of equipping Bible teachers for teaching is the design of the

teaching/learning process, which involves primarily two tasks. First, select teaching methods that are compatible with the nature of the literary genre, which the biblical author chose to communicate his/her message in a particular text. Second, establish a lesson plan that is compatible with the goal of Christian education, which aims at transformation of the learners' lives. These tasks will be discussed consecutively in the following, culminating in the presentation of three sample lesson plans at the end of the chapter.

Teaching Methods Compatible with Literary Genres

As Ryken and Wilhoit point out, teaching methods for a particular Bible lesson need to do justice to both the experiential nature of the biblical message and the literary nature of the biblical text.[44] In other words, the life experience of the people involved in the biblical event and the particular literary genre the biblical author chose to convey his/her message to the recipients must be considered. Therefore, the distinctive nature and means of communication of the three literary genres: narrative, wisdom and prophets, must be identified, so that compatible teaching methods may be selected.

Narrative. Biblical narratives are filled with struggles, resolutions and revelations of God's movement among His people; or to put it in another way, they are records of experiences of God's people as they encountered God at work in their world and in their personal lives.[45] Through affinity or identification with these experiences, learners may encounter the God of Scriptures in a meaningful and personal way. Therefore, learners must first be drawn into the world of the narrative. This can be done through a variety of teaching methods such as storytelling or dramatic reading that follows the contours of the biblical story, allowing hearers to relive the drama and tension of the unfolding narrative. For the more analytical minded learners, leading them through a close reading of the text by examining the distinctive literary features such as modes of narration, narrative techniques, characterization, etc., will also help to engage them in the narrative world.

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[44] Ryken and Wilhoit, 44.

[45] Hammett, 15.

Since the biblical world is far apart from ours both historically and culturally, contextual

analysis is necessary in order for learners to understand the purpose of the writing and the

theological theme and message before they can apply the message to their own lives. But due to

limited class time, the instructor may need to share relevant insights from his/her own study

through a brief lecture, or provide resources for a class member to study ahead of time and

present it to the class. Then learners may be led to identify with the struggles and experiences of

biblical characters through life story sharing or case study of contemporary people and situations.

A New Testament passage may be used to help learners see the teaching in the context of the

church. Finally, learners must be motivated to encounter God for a change of direction in their

lives, which may be done through meditation and prayer, decision-making, commitment writing

and accountability reporting, etc. *(B-Worksheet #5p)*

Wisdom.   The motivation for teaching and learning from wisdom literature is to

find wisdom and understanding for living, as expressed in Proverbs 1:2-6: "To know wisdom and

instruction, to discern sayings of understanding, to receive instruction in wise behavior." But as

Melchert points out, many wisdom texts seek more to provoke thought rather than to supply

answers, and expect learners to bring something to the text and do something with it.[46] Since the

wisdom approach emphasizes observation and reflection on nature and experience, learners must

do so accordingly in their own learning situation. There may be times when one body of

experience contradicts another. Such dilemma is built into the wisdom tradition itself, as in the

cases of Job and Qoheleth, who questioned the theological tradition of the wisdom teachers

because it contradicted the experiences of their times and in their lives. A contemporary example

is the interpretation and application of the advice on how to live with the king (Prov 16:10-15;

Eccl 8:2-4). It is evident that the texts assume a hierarchical authority and an arbitrary or coercive

rule of kings instead of the more rational and participatory decision-making basic to

contemporary democratic societies.[47] Therefore, learners must take seriously and reflect on both

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[46] Melchert, 13, 21.
[47] Ibid., 61-62.

the background of these writings and contemporary principles and practices derived from the collective experience of wisdom teachers such as historians, social-science researches, and community projects and experiments, etc., that they may apply these lessons appropriately to their own situations. But ultimately, as the wisdom teachers repeatedly remind their students, God alone holds the key to wisdom, so that wisdom teaching and learning must be dependent upon the Holy Spirit to make the life changing impact on the learners.

In the light of these characteristics, teaching methods must challenge learners to think and reflect, with emphasis on collective experience and conclusion. Provocative teaching methods such as paradox teaching, open-ended discussion and debate may be used to challenge the learners' thinking, but the focus must be on experience that comes out of daily living. Life story, case study and action reflection may serve to facilitate affective learning that is necessary to bring about life changes. *(B-Worksheet #5g)*

Prophetic.   As Brueggemann puts it, "The prophets...speak a newness which will not be contained in old categories...there is 'a planting and a building' which matches and over-matches 'the tearing down and the plucking up'" (Jer 1:10).[48] In other words, prophetic word is a new truth that presents a challenge to the old consensus rigidly held by the wealthy and the privileged who are immune to suffering, and make every effort to avoid it. And, claiming private experience with God, the prophets seek to "bring the passion of God to speech,"[49] so that God's people may notice "the human dimensions of pain and healing" and realize that such is "a match for what happens in the heart of God."[50] Therefore, to bring the prophetic message before the community of faith involves two parts: the tearing down of old consensus and the building up of a new sensitivity to the compassion of God.

This being the nature of the prophetic message, the teacher must first be convicted of the message, and be able to challenge the old consensus rigidly held by the learners. As

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[48] Brueggemann, Creative Word, 60.
[49] Ibid., 66.
[50] Ibid., 53.

Brueggemann suggests, "the educational task of the community is to nurture some to prophetic speech."[51] Perhaps, this is a legitimate place for the lecture method, or even "preaching," to be used in the classroom. If someone who can "preach" with conviction on a particular prophetic message, s/he can be invited for the session. Another teaching method that aims at challenging old consensus is the paradox or the debate. But a time for reflection is often still necessary. As old consensus can hardly be changed in a session or two, it is best to allow more sessions for each topic, and build up the theme in successive sessions. Finally, when the learners show signs of conviction, they need to be led to engage in compassion ministry in the community. *(B-Worksheet #5r)*

Lesson Plan Compatible with the Goal of Christian Education

A lesson plan for Christian education is basically an organization or sequencing of learning activities that aims at achieving the goal of Christian education, which is, as established in Chapter 3, a redeemed person or community of people being conformed to the image of Christ by engaging in a continuous process of sanctification. In other words, the lesson plan must be formulated in such a way that as the learners go through the lesson, they will be led step by step from understanding of biblical truth to applying it in their lives. In the long run, as they continue to apply truths to life, they will be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and be conformed to the image of Christ.

To be compatible with such a life-transforming goal, yet sensitive to the difficulties involved, a five-step lesson plan, primarily based on but a slightly modified form of Ford's principles of teaching is proposed. The basic assumption is that learning begins with factual knowledge; proceeds to understanding, which involves learning in the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy; and then moves on to, or concurrent with, attitudinal (or affective) learning. The last step is a modified version of Ford's motor skill development (which is independent of the other aspects of learning in his system), in order to ensure learners put learning into practice.

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[51] Ibid. 54.

Therefore, following this pattern of learning progression, but using terminology of the Inductive Bible study method familiar to Chinese American Christians, the five-step lesson plan proposed here are: Introduction (attention grabber), Observation (factual knowledge), Interpretation (understanding), Reflection (attitude) and Action (behavior or characterization in Bloom's Taxonomy). Once this format is in place, learning activities based on Ford's principles of learning/teaching may be designed,[52] and teaching methods selected.[53] An illustration of how this format functions for the first sample lesson is summarized in the following.[54]

The lesson goal must be stated in the beginning of the lesson plan to give direction to the design of the various learning activities in this five-step lesson plan. Aiming at getting the attention of the learners at the beginning of class, the Introduction that appeals to either the cognitive or the affective aspect of learning serves to stimulate their interest in the topic or demonstrate how the lesson is relevant to their lives. For example, the first sample lesson on consequences of unresolved family conflicts begins with class members sharing common unresolved conflicts between parents and children in Chinese American families and proposing reasons for their being unresolved. The aim is to get them participate in an activity relevant to the lesson and to their lives right from the start. The instructor then briefly introduces the literary and historical background of the lesson, which prepares them cognitively for the lesson that follows. The second step, Observation, leads learners to observe literary characteristics typical of the particular genre in the sample text, which applies principles of teaching factual knowledge. For the first sample lesson, by active listening to dramatic reading while taking notes on narrative techniques, the learning activity engages learners in active participation and in using more than one of the senses at the same time. The third step, Interpretation, deals with cognitive learning on a higher level. In the sample lesson, by using the discussion method with both open-ended and close-ended questions, learners are led to engage in learning activities that require abilities in

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[52] See "Principles of Learning/Teaching" of this chapter.
[53] See "Exploring a Variety of Teaching Methods" of this chapter.
[54] See Sample Lesson Plan #1: Narrative below alongside Ford's learning activities under "Principles of Learning/Teaching" of this chapter.

comprehension, analysis and synthesis (see question #1 under both sections: David as a father and David as a king). The fourth step, Reflection, deals with attitudinal learning in the affective domain. In the first sample lesson, by means of the life story teaching method, the instructor or someone whom the learners respect, shares from his/her personal experience the impact of unresolved family conflicts has on his/her life; thus applying the principle of teaching (attitude) by having learners hear from an authoritative source that exemplifies the attitude. The next activity of learners pairing up and sharing their own life stories, applies the principle of teaching (value) by reflecting on their values in light of Scripture, and by sharing insights with others in a climate of freedom. Then, learners are to read and meditate personally on 1 Timothy 3:2-5 with regards to their own life, which again applies the same principle by reflecting on their life experience in light of Scripture, and by making commitment to work on a problem area in the coming week. The last step, Action, leads learners to put learning into practice beyond the classroom. In the first sample lesson, three activities are designed to achieve this end. First, sharing and praying over their commitments apply the principles of sharing commitment in a climate of freedom (value) and praying for empowerment of the Holy Spirit (characterization). Second, carrying out their commitment in the following week applies the principle of taking action in real life (characterization). Third, sharing results the following week applies the principle of building accountability (characterization).

Obviously, in the actual teaching process, these activities may take longer than one session. But in view of the difficulty and the educational goal of life transformation, it is better to allow an extra session for these activities than to rush through them and not achieving the lesson goal. In addition, each sample lesson must not be taken as an independent study for a single Bible study session. Rather, it is part of a series of lessons on the same theme that last from a month to a quarter. Then, according to the nature of the lesson, the readiness of the specific group of learners, and the availability of local resources, the Christian educator must determine how each consecutive lessons can be arranged to lead the learners one step at a time toward taking concrete actions in applying the Bible lessons into their daily lives. *(B-Worksheet #5s)*

Sample Lesson Plan #1: Narrative

Lesson Title: Consequences of Unresolved Family Conflicts (2 Sam 18:1-19:8)

Lesson Goal: Learners will realize the detrimental consequences of unresolved family conflicts, and be willing to examine their own contribution to those existing in their lives, and take a step toward resolution by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Introduction: Class members share common unresolved conflicts between parents and children in Chinese American families, and propose reasons for their being unresolved. The instructor then introduces briefly the passage in its literary and historical contexts.

Observation: Class members engage in one of three listening teams while several students, each taking one of the characters and one narrator, engage in dramatic reading of the passage. Prior to reading, the instructor introduces the four modes of narration, with focus on the dialogue, and the use of narrative techniques such as repetition, suspense and hyperbole for special emphases; then instructs members on each listening team to take note of one of the dialogue and the three narrative techniques. Dramatic reading stops at the end of each episode (18:18 and 19:8) for listening teams to report on their discoveries. At the end of each report, the instructor leads the class in proposing possible emphases the narrator intends to bring out by using such techniques.

Interpretation: Class members participate in small group discussions on two main topics: David as a father and David as a king, guided by the following discussion questions. Prior to the discussion, have a class member prepare and present some background information (2 Samuel 12:7-10; 13:20-29; 13:37-39,14:21-24,28-33; 15:13-14) on Nathan's rebuke of David's sin and his relationship with Absalom, if they have not been covered in previous sessions.

David as a Father

1. From David's conversation with his troops in 18:2b-4a, discuss his attitude (sincerity) about going to the battle against Absalom. Had he gone to the battle, what would have been some likely scenarios for the rest of the story?

2. Based on his decision to stay behind and his command to deal gently with Absalom, discuss his way of handling conflicts. Judging from his style in the past, how would he have handled Absalom if the latter were captured alive and brought back to him?

3. Describe the emotions expressed by and give possible reasons for David's mourning. "Who would grant that I die instead of you!" (18:33).

David as a King

1. Compare and contrast David's attitude toward his troops and their attitude toward him, as seen in their interaction in episode one and in Joab's rebuke of him in episode two.

2. What does the repeated closing statement that Israel fled, each one to his tent (18:17b and 19:8b) hint about David's rule, as seen in the light of its repetitions in the contexts of 2 Samuel 20:1-2 and 1 Kings 12:16-19.

3. How did his failure as a father affect his performance as a king? Note also the implication of Israel's comment in 1 Kings 12:16: "...Look after your own house, O David!"

Groups are to report back to class after group discussion, to be followed by the instructor's summary of the theological theme and message.

Reflection:

1. Life story sharing: the instructor or another person respected by the learners shares from personal experience his/her contribution to unresolved family conflict and how it has affected parent/child relationship and church ministry. If the situation has been resolved or improved, share about it and its consequences.

2. Members pair up and share relevant stories from their own experiences.

3. Each person read and meditate on 1 Timothy 3:2-5 as he/she fills in his/her own name in the blanks below; then make a commitment to work on one of the unresolved area of the conflict in the coming week.

"Now _____ must be above reproach. the husband/wife of but one spouse. temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable. able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

_____ must manage his/her own family well and see that his/her children obey him/her with proper respect.

If _____ does not know how to manage his/her own family, how can _____ take care of God's church?"

By God's grace, one of the unresolved conflicts that I will work on this week is:

_____

Action:
1. Pair up to share and pray over the commitment with the same partner.
2. Carry out individual commitments in the coming week.
3. Next week, share with the same partner on progress made for accountability purposes.

Sample Lesson Plan #2: Wisdom

Lesson Title: What Are You Pursuits in Life? (Eccl 1:12-2:26)

Lesson Goal: Learners will reflect and evaluate the values they place on the pursuits of academic and work achievement from the perspective of the inevitable reality of death and the uncertainties of life, and accept the fruit of their labor in the context of human relationships as a portion given by God in this lifetime.

Introduction: Learners name some of the pursuits that preoccupy most Chinese American families, and brainstorm the kind of premium they have to pay for it to be successful.

Observation: Exercise to be done in advance as homework assignment. Study begins with the sharing of observation results by learners and historical background of the book by the instructor.

Exercise	Ecclesiastes 1: 12-15	Ecclesiastes 1: 13-18
Observation clues: e.g. "I saw/have seen/observed"		
Reflection clues: e.g. "I said to myself" "I know/ Who knows?" (give reason: "for")		
Conclusion clues: e.g. "nothing better than" "vanity/striving after wind"		

Interpretation: Three-part Discussion: the first and third led by the instructor; the second conducted in three groups, each taking up a section, and report back in 20 minutes.

Section One: Eccl. 1:12-18 (A)

1. Present the structure of this passage (based on p.42 of this study).

2. Identify the two main investigations that Qoheleth intends to carry out. How does he assure his audience that the results of his investigation are reliable?

3. What are his conclusions regarding his investigation? What are his reasons (or reflection) for his conclusions? Explain 1:15 in the light of 7:13.

Section Two: Group 1: Eccl. 2:1-11 (B)

1. How does Qoheleth go about conducting his experiments? How does he ensure their reliability?

2. Name some of the experiments he presumes to be "good" to do in life (Note key verbs).

3. What are his conclusions about pleasure, and about work?

4. What do you consider "good" in life that you are pursuing?

Group 2: Eccl. 2:12-17 (C)

1. What are his observations about wisdom and folly? How does he assure his audience that his observations are reliable?

2. What are his reflections and conclusion about wisdom and folly?

3. How do these reflections and conclusion affect his attitude about work and life?

4. What are your views on wisdom and folly? How do they affect your work and life?

Group 3: Eccl. 2:18-23 (B')

1. Identify the key word in this section, and explain its implications as opposed to "work."

2. Identify the three reasons Qoheleth derived from his reflection for his 3-fold conclusion.

3. How does his reflection on succession affect his attitude about labor?

4. Do you agree with Qoheleth's view about succession? Why or why not?

Section Three: Eccl. 2:24-26 (A')

1. Compare and contrast what Qoheleh presumes to be "good" in B with what he concludes as "good" in 2:26. What are the implications of "eat and drink"?

2. Trace the development of his evaluation of what is "good" in B to "vanity" (even "evil") in B', and finally to "good" in A'.

3. Instructor to give additional comment on what is "good" from the context of 6:10-7:14.

Reflection: A Case Study

Henry and Grace are bright and accomplished professionals, who have two sons, and own a beautiful home in a top school district. Their brilliant 13-year-old Teddy excels in just about every subject in school. Their 9-year-old Billy is also talented, though not as outstanding as

Teddy. Grace is well balanced in her responsibilities at home, at work and at church. Though preoccupied with his career, Henry manages to provide good leadership in a number of ministries at church. However, just like many other fathers, Henry does not spend much time relating to his sons, and seldom expresses satisfaction with their achievements. He often admonishes them to do better, and "Use your brain! Think it over!" are common expressions they hear around the house.

Teddy is a mature Christian for his age. At a summer youth camp for talented students sponsored by a well-renowned University, in which his faith was tested, he copied the Lord's Prayer in his notebook, and wrote his statement of faith underneath it, which reads, "By this I shall live." He had also expressed to his mother his desire to become a missionary some day. Grace affirmed him, but Henry was not too excited about the idea, and thought it might be a waste of his talents, although he did not discourage him at the time.

One day, Grace and Teddy were involved in a car accident. Grace was relatively unharmed while Teddy suffered a severe brain damage, which left him in a coma for the last four years. The faith of Henry and Grace was greatly tested, but sustained by the grace of God and the loving community of their local church. Teddy's classmates are now getting ready for college...

1. If you were Teddy's parents...

What might be some of your past aspirations for Teddy that are going through your mind now?
How might your perspectives about pursuits in life be changed by the accident?
How might the accident affect your aspirations for and relationship with Billy?

2. Have someone share an experience that has caused his/her change of pursuits in life; reasons that have hindered him/her from considering the change before the experience.

Reflection and Action:

Reflect on your pursuits at this point in life in light of Qoheleth's reflections and conclusions:
Pursuits that are preoccupying my life are: _____.
____ I do not see my need for change, because_____.
____ I do see my need for change, because _____;
    ____ but I am not willing to change, because_____
    ____ and I am willing to change, but my difficulty is_____
    ____ and I am willing to take one step to change in the following way(s):

    _____;

____ whether or not I see the need to change, or whether I am willing or not to change. I need help in the following way(s): _____.
Pair up and pray over your reflections and decisions.
Instructor closes the session by sharing a brief conclusion on how one might accept the fruit of one's labor in the context of human relationships as a portion given by God for this life time.

Sample Lesson Plan #3: Prophetic

Lesson Title: Living in the Presence of a Holy God (Isa 5)

Lesson Goal: Learners will reflect on their sins of human arrogance and social injustice that have brought about much pain, disappointment and anger of the Holy God, and be challenged to repent and to engage in an activity that helps increase sensitivity toward their lowly neighbors.

Introduction:

1. Class members share some of their gardening experiences that have brought joy and some that have brought disappointment and anger; and give reasons for both.

2. Instructor to introduce the relevant historical background of this lesson.

Observation: Instructor to introduce the four Acts of the divine-human drama of the Covenant relationship between the Lord and His people Israel; then learners identify the following from the Song of the Vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7 and 27:2-6

Act I: _____

Act II: _____

Act III: _____

Act IV: _____

The cause of the Lord's disappointment and anger:

_____

Observation and Interpretation: (Observation of forms and Interpretation of meanings)

1. Instructor to introduce the form of the Woe Oracle by using as an example the first Woe series (5:8-17); then lead class in discussing the meaning of the sins.

Accusation: a. _____

  Meaning: _____

      b. _____

  Meaning: _____

Doom Announcement: _____

  Cause: _____

  Intention: _____

2. Learners in pairs discuss the second Woe series (5:18-24); then report results as a class.

Accusation: a. _____

  Meaning: _____

b. _____

Meaning: _____

c. _____

Meaning. _____

d. _____

Meaning: _____

Doom Announcement: _____

Cause: _____

3. Instructor to lead discussion on the Lord's anger from 5:25-30; followed by a summary on the sins of Israel, the causes, the punishments and their purpose as discussed in this section.

Anger described (v.25) _____

Punishment (v.25) _____

Anger described (v.25) _____

Punishment (26-30) _____

4. Instructor to deliver a mini lecture on the following:

    a. How the sins of human arrogance and social injustice violate the sovereignty of God and the dignity of neighbors, which inevitably brings about the Lord's furious anger.

    b. The purpose of the Lord's punishment as reflected in 5:15-16 and 1:25-26.

    c. The intention of the prophet judgment speech as reflected in 1:16-20.

Reflection:

1. Role Play:

Ada: "Hi, Sally! How's your house hunting coming along?"

Sally: "Praise the Lord! Our recent offer has been accepted!"

Ada: "Congratulations! Where is the new home going to be?"

Sally: "In Cupertino; as a matter of fact, in the same block as yours!"

Ada: "There must have been at least half a dozen offers for that house!"

Sally: "Yeah! We offered $8,000 above the asking price, or we couldn't have gotten it."

Ada: "Well, that's the common practice nowadays, at least among our church members."

Sally: "I need to go sign the papers now. Cindy really looks forward to attending the same school as your girl Tina. You know, she always looks up to Tina as her role model."

Ada: "But we are moving out of the area as soon as the semester is over."

Sally: "Why?"

Ada: "The landlord has raised the rent again last month. With the kind of rental we are paying, we might as well buy a home. That's why we have also bought a home, but in San Jose."

Sally: "But the schools there aren't as good as the one Tina is now attending in Cupertino!"

Stella: "Well, we have no choice. We simply can't afford to live in Cupertino any more."

2. Debate: learners divided into two teams and debate whether or not the common practice of paying a higher than asking price for a home in a top school district constitutes social injustice.

3. Instructor to lead class discussion on the presuppositions of the two positions, the problem of community consensus, and how learners can increase sensitivity toward their lowly neighbors.

Alternate Activity: Instructor may choose to deliver a sermon covering the major issues discussed in Observation, Interpretation and Reflection above, then go on to Action.

Action:

1. Learners write an individual prayer of repentance by completing the following:

   "Dear Lord, I am sorry that instead of the good grapes of justice and righteousness that You desire to find in me, I have produced wild grapes by..."

2. Community prayer of repentance: begun by the instructor. learners voluntarily pray the prayer s/he has written:

   "Dear Lord, we are sorry that instead of the good grapes of justice and righteousness that You desire to find in us, we have produced wild grapes by..."

3. Instructor and learners make an action plan on increasing sensitivity toward their lowly neighbors.

4. Take a month to work on it and evaluate as a class a month later.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

This project began in Chapter 1 by discussing the results of a survey on the Bible

teaching and learning situations in some of the Chinese American churches. The survey was

conducted of 100 teachers representing 11 churches and 1855 adult learners, and the results

substantiated this author's general observations that there is a lack of suitable curriculum

resources and teacher training in biblical interpretation, an inadequate application of biblical truth

to life, and an infrequent use of interactive, creative and thought-provoking teaching methods

conducive to learning and life changes. Therefore, an urgent need was identified as training

teachers for a more effective teaching ministry, and the design of this resource was as an attempt

to address this need.

The thesis of this project was that effectiveness in Bible teaching in the Chinese

American Church can be increased by training teachers to interpret the biblical text according to

its literary genre; apply the biblical message to the lives of the Chinese American learners in light

of the goal of Christian education; and teach the Bible lesson that aims at life changes.

While the survey was originally conducted to measure the effectiveness of the teaching

ministry in terms of biblical interpretation, application of biblical truth to life and teaching

methods used in the classroom setting, other findings have surfaced from the results that deserve

further attention. For example, about two thirds of the teachers have not had any training in Basic

Theology and Age Group characteristics of adults. Due to the scope of this project, the deficiency

was not addressed. Further surveys are also needed to find out the reasons for some of the

phenomena reported, such as the infrequent use of teaching methods other than the lecture despite

the fact that two thirds of the teachers have received training on the topic. This project assumed

that they were not convinced of the need or that previous trainings were inadequate, but such an

assumption would have to be verified in order to make training more relevant and practical.

Chapter 2 addressed the need to increase teaching effectiveness by training teachers the

basic skills of biblical interpretation according to their respective literary genres. Three of the

major Old Testament genres considered were: Narrative, Wisdom literature and Prophetic book, and each was analyzed in terms of its literary characteristic and literary and historical contexts, as a result of which its theological theme and message was identified. To demonstrate the skills involved in the process of interpretation, a sample passage was selected for each genre: 2 Samuel 18:1-19:8 for Narrative, Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:26 for Wisdom literature and Isaiah 5 for Prophetic book; and a set of worksheets was provided in Appendix B to help learners go through the steps of interpretation in a systematic fashion.

Literary characteristics analyzed for Narrative were scenes, narration, repetitions, irony, suspense, hyperbole, structure, plot and characterization. Studies of these features served to bring learners to the world of the Bible characters, to relive the drama, and to get at the meaning and intention of the narrator who portrayed them. The selected sample passage seemed to serve the purpose well, for all of the basic literary characteristics were found to demonstrate their functions. Its immediate context of Absalom's revolt also helped to provide an adequate resource for a fruitful study on the topic of unresolved family conflicts. However, the theme in its larger context, hypothesized by Biblical scholars as the "Succession Narrative" is controversial, as a result of which the biblical author's intention cannot be established with certainty, which in turn affected the certainty of the theological theme and message identified. Due to the complication of the issue involved and the anticipated difficulty for the laypersons to understand the conflicting views of Bible scholars, efforts have not been made to help learners evaluate them.

The literary characteristics studied in the Wisdom literature on the books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes include nature and experience, observation and reflection, proverbs and sayings, poetry, disputation, didactic narrative, royal testament and structure and content. As a result, the uniqueness of the three books' literary features and structures were discovered, and the development of the wisdom theme in them was traced. However, the theme and message of the sample passage could very well have been identified by studying it in the context of Ecclesiastes alone, without going through the process of analyzing the other two books. But the study of all

three books should provide teachers with a good framework for future study and teaching in Wisdom literature.

Prophetic literature employs a variety of sub-genres as well as image clusters. The sub-genres explored in this study were the judgment speech, woe oracle, salvation speech, announcement of a royal savior, trial oracle, disputation, vocation account and vision report. Covered under image clusters were sexual relationship, vineyard, wine drinking and animals, with special focus on the vineyard due to its appearance in the sample passage. The study of the sub-genres helped in the demarcation and interpretation of the prophetic message, as well demonstrated by the study of the sample passage. The study of the image clusters was most helpful in identifying the stage of the divine-human drama of covenant relationship between the Lord and Israel in the biblical text under discussion, hence providing an important context for interpreting its message. While crucial to interpretation, the historical background to the individual literary units could be confusing at times, especially when commentators come to conflicting conclusions, sometimes due to their understanding of the redaction activities behind the texts. Since it may not be helpful to discuss the concept of redaction with the laypersons, attempts have not been made to do so. Educators and pastors would have to use their discretions in suggesting commentaries to their teachers based on their various faith traditions.

The attempt to increase effectiveness in teaching covered in Chapter 3 was to equip Bible teachers to apply the biblical message to the lives of Chinese American learners, that they may grow toward spiritual maturity, which is the goal of Christian education. Therefore, the goal of Christian education in terms of what it is and how it is assessed was first identified from Scripture. Then in the light of this goal, the Chinese American's spiritual needs and issues corresponding to their experience as the so-called "Model Minority" in the American society was analyzed. Finally, a process for applying Bible lessons to life was proposed: first, create a supportive community conducive to life changes; second, make a realistic assessment of the learners' readiness for change in particular areas; and third, relate the biblical message to life as demonstrated by the application of the three sample messages. Worksheets provided in this session served to help

trainers conduct teacher training workshops step by step, and be encouraged to solicit active participation from learners to make learning more fruitful and relevant to their own situations.

The goal of Christian education identified from Scripture provided a good qualitative standard for assessing the learner's spiritual maturity. The analyses of the Chinese American experiences in terms of academic and economic achievements, discrimination, intergenerational conflicts, and poverty and social injustice were revealing and practical. Since the teachers are not accustomed to addressing such issues in their teaching, as reflected from the results of the survey, and yet these issues are so relevant and significant to the lives of Chinese Americans, they should find them stimulating. Hopefully, the discussions in this section would provide the necessary catalyst for further studies and discussion, and the teacher training workshop would be a good setting to start them thinking and interacting on these issues. The proposal of a process for applying Bible lessons to life must remain a proposal, in view of the anticipated differences in the program structures of the local churches, and the varying degrees of awareness and readiness for changes in the different congregations. It is hoped that training workshop participants would be stimulated to make proposals for their own churches.

Chapter 4 was concerned with training teachers for the actual teaching of the Bible lesson, which aimed at impacting the learners' lives beyond the classroom setting. The first step was to examine several educational theories of learning, which provided the necessary foundation for the selection of teaching methods as well as for the design of the teaching/learning process. Then the effective use of a variety of teaching methods, including lecture, discussion, debate, paradox, case study, action reflection, life story and creative writing were explored. Finally, a design of the teaching/learning process to achieve educational goals was proposed, which was based on Ford's principle of teaching as derived from Bloom's Taxonomy.

Educational theories discussed in this chapter served to convince teachers of the necessity of employing a variety of teaching methods. Judging from the survey discussed in Chapter 1, the teachers can certainly use the help of teaching methods discussed in this resource. However, such a resource in written form could hardly replace the effectiveness of an actual person

demonstrating the use of these teaching methods. For this reason, the suggestion was made to allow teachers participating in the training workshop to demonstrate using these methods, either individually, or in teams. Hopefully, such a methodology would provide the catalyst for further research and practice of the various methods among the teachers, so that more lasting impacts of Bible lessons could be made on their learners.

Overall, the literary genre approach to biblical interpretation and instruction in this resource seemed to prove fruitful for understanding and teaching of the biblical message. The study has resulted in identifying a theological theme and message for each of the three sample passages explored, in applying its message to address issues relevant to the life experience of Chinese Americans, and in designing a sample lesson plan for each of the three literary genres represented by the passages: the Narrative, the Wisdom and the Prophetic. It is therefore suggested that similar research and development on other genres such as the Law, the Psalms, the Gospels, the Epistles and the Apocalyptic literature be carried out for the purpose of increasing Bible teachers' effectiveness in handling the whole counsel of God. While the application of biblical truth to life (Chapter 3) was designed to address specific issues relevant to Chinese Americans, the goal of Christian education (Chapter 3) and the literary genre approach to biblical interpretation (Chapter 2) and instruction (Chapter 4) are equally valid for all peoples of the Christian Church.

May this resource be found helpful to equip teachers for a more effective teaching ministry of His Word in the Christian Church in general and the Chinese American Church in particular, so that learners may grow in conforming to the image of Christ for the glory of God. It is to this end that the author has joyfully labored on this teacher training resource, and to the Lord who called her and continues to equip her for the ministry of His Word that she has dedicated this Doctor of Ministry project.

APPENDIX A

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL SURVEY

Survey Form

Survey Tabulation

#1a: OT Courses

#1b: NT Courses

#2: Plan for Offering Courses

#3: Plan for Teacher Training

#4: Teacher's Training Background

#5: Teaching Methods

#6: Use of Resources

#7: Kinds of Application

#8: Student Assignment

#9: Student Application

#10: Need for Further Training

Survey Form

Date:_____

Church:_____ Denomination:_____

Average # in Worship:_____ Mand._____ Eng._____ Cant._____

Average # in S.S.: _____ Mand._____ Eng._____ Cant._____

Your Role: Teacher____ Director____ Minister of CE____ Other:_____

Part A: to be filled out by S.S. Director or Minister of CE

1. List S.S. courses offered in the last three years (all languages):

2. Does your church have a plan for courses offered in S.S.? ___(Y/N)
    Describe your plan, whether long- or short-term, and criteria for selecting
    topics or books of the Bible (Please attach a copy of your plan if available).

3. Does your church have an on-going plan to train teachers? ___(Y/N)
    Describe the kinds of training your teachers have received in the last 3-5
    years (Please attach a copy of your plan if available).

<u>Part B: to be filled out by Teacher:</u> Students' Ages __21-35; __36-65; __Over 65

4. Indicate your previous training or general background for Bible teaching:

    ___OT Survey   ___NT Survey   ___Theology   ___Inductive Bible Study

    ___Teaching Methods   ___Needs & Age Group Characteristics of Adults

    Others:_____

5. Indicate frequency of teaching methods used (1-4: 1 = just about every week;
    2 = 1-2 times a month; 3 = 1-2 times a quarter; 4 = rarely/never):

    ___Lecture   ___Discussion (close-ended: conclusion drawn by teacher)

    ___Case Study   ___Discussion (open-ended: conclusion drawn by class)

    ___Skit   ___Debate   ___Student Presentation   ___Small Group Sharing

    Others:_____

6. Indicate frequency of resources and audio-visuals used (1-4 as #5):

    ___Curriculum   ___Commentaries   ___Concordances   ___Dictionaries

    ___Audio tapes   ___Video Tapes   ___Board   ___Transparencies

    Others:_____

7. Indicate average time spent on Lesson Application (60-minute session):

    ___7 minutes or less   ___8-14 minutes   ___15 minutes or more

    Kinds of Issues addressed in Lesson Application (1-4 as #5):

    ___Christian Living (relationship with God, with others and with self in general)

    ___Chinese American (ABC/OBC & minority issues at home, church & society)

    ___Christian Mission (Gospel outreach, including social justice & compassion)

    Remarks:_____

8. Indicate frequency of student assignment before or after class (1-4 as #5):

    ___Reading   ___Writing   ___Action   ___Reflection   ___Memory Work

    Does the teacher carry out the assignments too?   ___ (Y/N)

9. In your judgment, what percentage of students practice what they learn:

    ___Less than 10%   ___10-25%   ___25-50%   ___Over 50%

10. Identify area(s) of need for further training:

    ___ Learning Theories/Teaching Methods;   ___Application of Truth to Life;

    OT Interpretation: ___Narratives;   ___Psalms;   ___Prophets;   ___Wisdom

    NT Interpretation: ___Gospels;   ___Epistles;   ___Revelation

#1a   Frequency of OT cources offered in Adult Sunday School

Lng=language group: C=Cantonese; M=Mandarin; E=English. NR=Not represented in survey
*=Number represents Cantonese and English adult and young adult groups; not congregation
Ttl=total number in worship/Sunday School/% of worshippers in Sunday School

Church No.	Congregation Lng/#wshp/#SS/%	Pntatch	Hstrcl Bks	Wsdm	Pslms	Prophts	Survy	Remarks
1	C M E *Ttl: 775/620/80%							Lack Info
2	C: 130/ 85 M: 0 E: 50/ 15 Ttl: 180/100/56%	Exd, Lev, Num.	Jos		X		X	Salv Hst
3	C: 545/105 M: 70/ 25 E: 130/ 85 Ttl: 745/215/29%	Gen, Characters	Jdg, Ezr/Neh	Prov	X	Dan, Isa		Salv Hst
4	C: 60/ 30 M: 180/ 90 E: NR Ttl: 240/120/50%		Jos, Jdg, 1 Sam	Job		Isa, Dan, Mic, Nah, Hab, Zeph		
5	C: / 12 M: 140/ 23 E: 110/ 20 Ttl: 250/ 55/22%	Gen				Mnr Proph	X	
6	C: 50/ 0 M: 250/ 65 E: 100/ 15 Ttl: 400/ 80/20%							No Bible Courses; all Topical
7	C: 110/ 50 M: 320/ 150 E: 200/ 70 Ttl: 630/270/43%	Gen, Lev Num, Deut	Sam, Kgs, Chr, Neh	Job, Prov		Isa, Lam, Mnr Proph, Nah		
8	C: NR M: 200/ 80/40% E: NR Ttl:	Gen			X		X	
9	C: 70/ 25 M: 230/105 E: 120/ 35 Ttl: 420/ 165/39%	Exd, Lev, Deut, Pntateuch	Jdg, Sam Kgs, Neh/Ezra,	Prov Eccl Wsdm	X	Jer. Proph. Hos, Joel, Ams, Jona, Mnr Proph	X	5-yr
10	C: 120/ 50/42% M: NR E: NR Ttl:	Characters	Jos		X		X	
11	C: 300 M: 50 E: 200 Ttl: 550/100/18%	Deut	Sam, Kgs, Ezr/Neh, Esth	Job		Isa, Jer		

Total: 4510/1855/41%

#1b Frequency of NT courses offered in Adult Sunday School

Lng=language group: C=Cantonese; M=Mandarin; E=English. NR=Not represented in survey
*=Number represents Cantonese and English adult and young adult groups; not congregation
Ttl=total number in worship/Sunday School/% of worshippers in Sunday School

Church No.	Congregation Lng/flwshp/#SS/%	Gospls	Acts	Pauline Epstls	Othr Epstls	Revltn	Survy	Remarks
1	C M E *Ttl: 775/620/80%							
2	C: 130/ 85 M: 0 E: 50/ 15 Ttl: 180/100/56%	Mk, Lk	X	2 Cor		X	X	
3	C: 545/105 M: 70/ 25 E: 130/ 85 Ttl: 745/215/29%	Mt, Mk, Jn, Gospls, Jesus	X	Rm, Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, 1/2 Tim	Jms, 1/2/3 Jn			
4	C: 60/ 30 M: 180/ 90 E: NR Ttl: 240/120/50%		X	Rm, 1 Cor, 1/2 Thes	Heb, 1 Pet, 1/2/3 Jn			
5	C: / 12 M: 140/ 23 E: 110/ 20 Ttl: 250/ 55/22%	Mt, Jn, Syn Gospls		Rm				
6	C: 50/ 0 M: 250/ 65 E: 100/ 15 Ttl: 400/ 80/20%							
7	C: 110/ 50 M: 320/ 150 E: 200/ 70 Ttl: 630/270/43%			1/2 Cor, Gal, Phil, Col, Phlm, Titus, 1/2 Tim	Jms, 1/2 Pet, 1/2/3 Jn			
8	C: NR M: 200/ 80/40% E: NR Ttl:	Jn		Rm, 1 Cor			X	
9	C: 70/ 25 M: 230/105 E: 120/ 35 Ttl: 420/ 165/39%	Lk, Jn, Parbls, Life of Christ	X	1/2 Cor, Col, 1/2 Tim, 1/2 Thes, Prsn Epstls	1/2 Pet 1/2/3 Jn	X	X	
10	C: 120/ 50/42% M: NR E: NR Ttl:	Mk		Rm		X	X	
11	C: 300 M: 50 E: 200 Ttl: 550/100/18%	Mt, Mk	X	Rm, Gal, Eph, Phil, Col, 1/2 Tim, 1/2 Thes	1/2 Pet, 2 Jn		X	
Total:	4510/1855/41%							

#2 Does your church have a plan for courses offered in S.S.?   **#3 Does your church have a plan to train S.S. teachers?**

Church No.	Congregation Lngth/Mbrshp/#SS/%	Y/N	Sht Trn	Lng Trn	Criteria for Bk Selctn	Y/N	Remarks
1	C M E Ttl: 775/620/80%	N			Based on needs, determined by tchers; Mostly topical	Y	3-yr plan: 2 yr corswrk OT & NT Survys, Theol, Outlining, C.E., Tchng Mthds, Care & Counseling 2 yr practical training
2	C: 130/ 85 M 0 E: 50/ 15 Ttl: 180/100/56%	Y		X	So Bpt Explr the Bbl sries Cover whole Bbl in no. of yrs (over 10 yrs)	Y	Go along with So Bpt Cntn Trnng
3	C: 545/105 M: 70/ 25 E: 130/ 85 Ttl: 745/215/29%	Y	X		4 majr categories: Bbl expstn, systmtc theo stdy, X'ian fndtn & mnstry, & ldrshp trnng	Y	BASS, CE Conference, Trnng wrkshps 2x a yr, SS ldrshp trnng
4	C: 60/ 30 M: 180/ 90 E NR Ttl: 240/120/50%	Y		X	cover whole Bbl in 14 yrs	Y	Teaching methods, Hermeneutics includes Outlining
5	C: / 12 M: 140/ 23 E: 110/ 20 Ttl: 250/ 55/22%	N			None	N	
6	C: 50/ 0 M: 250/ 65 E: 100/ 15 Ttl: 400/ 80/20%				Emphasis on Spiritual, not Bible knowledge; all topical	Y	Slowly, no listing of courses, focus not only on teaching, also shepherding
7	C: 110/ 50 M: 320/ 150 E: 200/ 70 Ttl: 630/270/43%	Y	X		cover whole Bbl in 3 yrs reading Bbl in 1 yr	Y	Bible study methd, OT/NT survys Theol, Prncpls of tchng, Genre intrprttn
8	C NR M: 200/ 80/40% E NR Ttl:	Y	X		4 types: New X'ian, Dscpl, Srvnt, Leader	Y	Spiritual life development, genre intrprttn: narrtve and pslms, Tchng methds
9	C: 70/ 25 M: 230/105 E: 120/ 35 Ttl: 420/165/39%	Y	X		planning 3 yr at a time	Y	6 mo/yr
10	C: 120/ 50/42% M NR E NR Ttl:	N			Up to teachers: on Bbl, 1 topical, 1 Nwcmr/X'ian	Y	Pedagogy & techniques of S.S. tchng
11	C: 300 M: 50 E: 200 Ttl:550/100/18%	Y		X	Cover whole Bbl systematically (about 12 yrs)	Y	BASS, Trnng smnars (1/2 x/yr), semnry courses, tchng videos

Total: B214510/1855/41%

#4 Indicate your previous training or general background for Bible teaching:

Church No.	Teacher No.	OT Survey	NT Survey	Theology	Ind. Bible Study	Teaching Methods	Needs&Age Group Char.	Remarks
1	1	X	X	X	X	X		
	2	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	3	X	X	X		X	X	
	4	X	X	X		X		
	5	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	6	X	X	X	X	X		Discipleship training
	7	X	X		X	X		Caring
	8	X	X		X	X		Discipleship training
	9		X		X	X		Discipleship training
	10	X	X		X	X	X	Caring
	11	X	X		X	X		Caring
	12		X		X	X	X	
	13	X	X	X		X	X	Leadership, counceling
	14	X	X	X	X	X		
	15	X	X	X		X		
	16	X	X	X	X	X		Discipleship training
	17	X	X	X	X	X	X	Counceling, Storytelling
	18							Self studying
	19	X	X		X	X	X	Counceling
	20	X	X	X	X	X	X	Discipleship training
	21	X	X	X	X	X	X	Discipleship/leadership
	22							training
	23	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	24	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	25	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	26	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2	27					X		
	28	X				X		
	29				X			Seven laws
	30	X	X		X			
	31	X	X			X		
	32	X	X		X	X		
	33				X			
	34				X			
	35				X	X		
3	36	X	X		X	X	X	
	37	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	38	X	X				X	
	39	X	X			X		
	40	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	41	X	X	X	X	X	X	Memphis Theol Smnry
	42	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	43	X			X	X		Seminary graduate
4	44	X	X			X		
	45	X	X		X			
	46	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	47	X	X	X	X	X		
5	48	X	X	X	X	X	X	Seminary
	49							
	50	X	X	X	X	X		

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#4 Indicate your previous training or general background for Bible teaching:

Church No.	Teacher No.	OT Survey	NT Survey	Theology	Ind.Bible Study	Teaching Methods	Needs&Age Group Char.	Remarks
6	51							
	52				X			
	53			X				
	54	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	55							
7	56	X	X	X	X			
	57	X	X					
	58	X	X		X	X		
	59	X	X		X	X		
8	60	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	61	X	X		X	X		
	62	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	63	X	X		X	X		
	64	X	X		X	X	X	
	65			X	X	X		
	66	X	X	X	X	X	X	
9	67	X	X	X				
	68	X	X					
	69				X		X	
	70		X					
	71				X			
	72	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	73		X		X			
	74				X	X		
	75	X			X		X	
	76	X	X					
	77	X	X		X	X	X	
	78							
	79	X		X				
	80	X	X		X			
	81				X			
10	82	X	X	X				
	83	X	X		X	X	X	
	84	X	X		X	X	X	
	85	X	X					
	86				X			
	87	X	X		X			
	88				X			
	89	X	X			X		
	90	X	X					
	91	X	X			X		
	92							Music education
11	93				X			
	94		X		X	X		
	95				X	X	X	How to be a sml grp ldr
	96					X		
	97		X		X	X		
	98		X	X	X	X		
	99							Tk biblcl study in college
	100				X	X		

#5 Indicate frequency of teaching methods used (1-4):

(1=just about every week; 2=1-2 times a month; 3=1-2 times a quarter; 4=rarely/never)

Church No.	Teacher No.	Lecture	Cls-end Dscussn	Opn-end Dscussn	Case Study	Skit	Debate	Studnt Prsntn	Sml Grp Dscssn	Remarks
1	1	2	2	2	3	4	4	4	2	
	2	1	2	2	3	4	4	3	1	
	3	2	2	4	3	4	4	4	2	
	4	1	1	4	3	4	4	4	2	
	5	1	2	3	2	4	4	3	4	
	6	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	7	1	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	
	8	1	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	
	9	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	10	2	4	3	4	4	4	4	2	
	11	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	12	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	13*	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	*answer given
	14	2	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	in X instead
	15	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	of in number;
	16	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	value
	17	2	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	assigned:
	18	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	1-3X=1
	19	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	4-6X=2
	20	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	7-8X=3
	21	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	blank=4
	22	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	23	2	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	
	24	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	
	25	2	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	
	26	1	2	3	2	4	4	3	4	
2	27	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	28	1	1	1	1	4	4	3	3	
	29	1	2	3	3	4	4	4	2	
	30	1	1	3	3	4	4	4	3	
	31	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	32	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	2	
	33	1	2	2	3	4	4	4	4	
	34	4	1	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	35*	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	
3	36	2	2	4	3	3	4	4	3	
	37	2	2	2	3	4	4	4	2	
	38	1	2	2	3	4	4	4	1	
	39	1	2	2	4	4	4	4	3	
	40	1	2	3	4	4	4	3	3	
	41	1	1	1	2	4	4	4	4	
	42	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	43	1	2	3	4	4	4	4	4	
4	44*	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	
	45	2	1	2	3	4	4	3	2	
	46	2	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	
	47	1	1	4	2	4	4	4	4	
5	48	1	1	1	3	4	3	2	1	
	49	1	1	3	2	2	1	4	4	
	50*	1	1	4	1	4	4	4	4	

#5 Indicate frequency of teaching methods used (1-4):
(1=just about every week; 2=1-2 times a month; 3=1-2 times a quarter; 4=rarely/never)

Church No.	Teacher No.	Lecture	Cls-end Dscussn	Opn-end Dscussn	Case Study	Skit	Debate	Studnt Prsnttn	Sml Grp Dscssn	Remarks
	51	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	52	1	4	1	4	4	4	4	4	
6	53	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	54	1	2	4	4	4	4	4	2	
	55	1	2	4	3	4	4	4	3	
	56	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
7	57	1	3	2	3	4	4	1	1	
	58	1	2	3	3	4	4	4	3	
	59	2	2	3	4	4	4	3	3	
	60*	2	2	4	2	4	4	2	2	*answer given
	61	1	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	in X instead
	62	1	1	4	1	4	4	3	3	of in number;
8	63	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	value
	64*	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	1	assigned:
	65	1	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	1-3X=1
	66	1	2	3	4	4	4	3	3	4-6X=2
	67	1	4	2	1	4	2	4	4	7-8X=3
	68	1	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	blank=4
	69	1	4	3	1	3	3	3	1	
	70	1	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	
	71	1	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	
	72	1	4	3	1	4	4	3	2	
9	73	1	2	4	3	4	4	4	4	
	74	1	4	2	1	4	4	2	1	
	75	1	4	3	1	3	3	3	1	
	76	1	4	4	2	4	4	3	2	
	77	1	4	3	1	3	3	3	1	
	78	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	79	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	80	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	81	1	4	3	1	4	4	3	1	
	82	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	83	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	1	
	84	1	1	2	1	4	4	1	2	
	85	1	4	3	3	4	4	4	2	
10	86*	1	4	1	4	4	4	4	4	
	87	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	
	88*	4	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	89	1	1	1	4	3	4	4	3	
	90	4	1	4	1	4	4	4	4	
	91	1	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	
	92	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	mssn bckgrnd
	93*	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	
	94	1	1	3	3	4	3	4	2	
	95	1	1	4	3	4	4	3	2	
11	96	2	2	3	3	4	4	3	3	
	97	1	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	98	1	1	3	3	4	3	4	3	
	99	1	1	4	4	4	4	3	3	
	100	1	3	4	4	4	4	4	1	

#6 Indicate frequency of resources and audio-visuals used (1-4):
(1=just about every week; 2=1-2 times a month; 3=1-2 times a quarter; 4=rarely/never)

Church No.	Teacher No.	Curriculum	Commentary	Concordance	Dictionary	Audio tape	Video Tape	Board	Transparency	Remarks
1	1	2	4	3	4	4	4	2	4	
	2	1	1	2	2	3	4	4	3	
	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	
	4*	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	*answer given in X
	5*	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	instead of in number
	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	value assigned:
	7	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	1-3X=1
	8	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	4-6X=2
	9	4	1	1	1	4	4	1	4	7-8X=3
	10	4	4	2	4	4	4	2	4	blank=4
	11	4	4	2	2	4	4	4	4	
	12	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	13	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	14	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	15	4	2	4	2	4	4	1	4	
	16	2	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	17	2	2	3	3	4	4	2	4	
	18	4	4	1	1	4	4	4	4	
	19	1	1	1	1	4	4	1	4	
	20	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	21	1	4	1	1	4	4	1	4	
	22*	2	2	2	2	4	4	4	4	
	23	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	24	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	25	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	26	1	1	1	1	4	4	1	4	
2	27	4	1	1	1	4	4	4	4	
	28	3	1	1	1	4	4	1	4	
	29	1	1	3	4	4	4	1	4	
	30	1	1	4	3	4	3	4	4	
	31	2	2	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	32	1	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	33	1	2	4	4	3	4	4	4	
	34	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	35*	4	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	
3	36	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	
	37	2	2	2	2	4	3	3	4	
	38	1	2	2	2	4	4	1	4	
	39	1	1	1	3	4	4	2	2	
	40	1	2	3	3	4	3	2	3	
	41	1	1	2	2	4	1	1	4	Handouts
	42	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	3	
	43	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	
4	44*	1	1	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	45	3	1	2	4	4	3	1	3	
	46	3	3	3	2	4	4	3	3	
	47	1	1	2	2	4	3	1	3	
5	48	3	1	1	1	3	2	1	4	
	49	1	2	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	50*	4	1	4	4	4	4	1	1	

#6 Indicate frequency of resources and audio-visuals used (1-4):
(1=just about every week; 2=1-2 times a month; 3=1-2 times a quarter; 4=rarely/never)

Church No.	Teacher No.	Curri-culum	Com-mentary	Concor-dance	Dic-tionary	Audio tape	Video Tape	Board	Trans-parency	Remarks
6	51	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	52	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	53	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	54	1	2	2	3	4	4	4	4	
	55	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
7	56*	4	4	1	1	4	4	4	4	*answer given in X
	57	3	2	3	3	4	4	1	4	instead of in number
	58	1	1	1	1	4	4	1	3	value assigned:
	59*	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	4	1-3X=1
8	60	4	1	1	4	4	4	1	4	4-6X=2
	61	1	1	1	1	3	4	4	3	7-8X=3
	62	1	1	2	2	4	4	2	4	blank=4
	63	3	2	2	2	4	4	3	4	
	64*	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
	65	1	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	
	66	1	1	1	1	4	4	2	3	
9	67	1	3	3	3	4	4	1	4	
	68	1	2	2	2	4	3	1	3	
	69	1	2	2	2	4	3	1	3	
	70	4	3	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	71	1	1	2	2	4	4	1	4	
	72	1	1	1	1	4	3	1	3	
	73	4	1	4	4	4	4	3	4	
	74	1	2	2	4	4	2	1	4	
	75	1	2	2	3	4	3	1	2	
	76	1	2	2	4	4	3	1	4	
	77	1	1	1	1	4	2	1	3	
	78	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	
	79	4	1	3	3	3	4	4	4	
	80	1	1	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	81	1	3	3	3	4	1	2	4	
10	82	4	1	1	4	4	4	2	2	
	83	1	1	2	4	4	4	1	4	
	84	1	2	2	2	4	4	1	4	
	85	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	86	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	1	
	87*	4	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	
	88	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	89	1	2	4	4	3	4	1	4	
	90	1	1	4	1	4	4	4	4	
	91	1	1	1	1	4	4	1	3	
	92	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Musd instrmnt/Sngng
11	93	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4	
	94	1	1	4	2	4	3	2	1	
	95	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	96	1	1	1	2	3	3	1	4	
	97	1	1	1	2	3	3	1	4	
	98	3	3	2	4	3	4	1	4	
	99	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	100	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	

#7 **Time Spent on Application** **Kind of Issue Addressed**

Church No.	Teacher No.	7 min/less	8 to 14 min	15 min/more	Remarks	Xian Lv'g	Chn Amrcn	Xian Missn	Remarks
1	1			x		1	4	4	
	2		x			1	2	2	
	3		x			2	4	3	
	4			x		2	2	4	
	5	x				4	4	1	
	6		x			1	2	2	
	7		x			1	4	2	
	8		x			4	3	4	
	9	x				1	1	4	
	10		x			1	1	4	
	11		x			2	2	4	
	12	x				3	3	3	*answer given in X
	13		x			2	2	4	instead of in number
	14	x				3	3	3	value assigned:
	15	x				2	4	2	1X=1
	16			x		4	2	3	2X=2
	17	x				2	3	3	3X=3
	18	x				4	4	4	blank=4
	19	x				1	2	4	
	20	x				1	1	1	
	21	x				1	1	2	
	22			x		4	1	3	
	23		x			4	4	2	
	24	x				3	3	3	
	25	x				4	4	4	
	26			x		1	4	1	
2	27		x			1	4	4	
	28	x				1	4	3	
	29		x			1	3	2	
	30		x			1	4	3	
	31		x			2	4	2	
	32		x			2	4	2	*
	33	x				1	2	2	
	34			x		1	4	4	
	35			x		1	4	4	*
3	36					4	2	3	
	37			x		4	3	3	
	38			x		1	4	4	*
	39	x				2	4	2	
	40	x				1	3	3	
	41		x			1	1	2	
	42			x		1	3	2	
	43			x		2	2	2	
4	44			x		1	4	4	*
	45		x			1	4	4	*
	46	x				1	4	4	
	47			x		2	2	2	Not applicable
5	48			x		1	1	1	
	49	x				1	2	3	
	50		x			2	4	2	*

#7   **Time Spent on Application**   **Kind of Issue Addressed**

Church No.	Teacher No.	7 min/ less	8 to 14 min	15 min/ more	Remarks	Xian Lv'g	Chn Amrcn	Xian Missn	Remarks
6	51			x		1	4	4	
	52			x		1	4	4	* answer given in X
	53		x			1	4	4	instead of in number
	54			x		1	4	3	value assigned:
	55		x			1	4	4	* 1X=1
7	56			x		2	2	2	2X=2
	57			x		1	4	3	3X=3
	58	x				1	2	3	blank=4
	59		x			2	2	2	
8	60			x		1	4	4	*
	61		x			1	4	2	
	62		x			1	2	2	
	63	x				1	4	2	
	64	x				1	4	4	*
	65			x		1	4	1	
	66	x				1	1	2	
9	67		x			1	3	2	
	68		x			1	3	3	
	69		x			1	2	2	
	70	x				1	3	3	
	71		x			1	3	3	
	72		x			1	3	3	
	73		x			1	4	3	
	74		x			1	2	2	
	75		x			1	2	2	
	76		x			1	3	3	
	77			x		1	2	2	
	78			x		1	2	2	
	79	x				2	4	3	
	80	x				1	4	3	
	81			x		1	2	3	
10	82		x			3	3	3	*
	83			x		1	4	4	*
	84			x		1	4	4	This S.S. series (3 mo.)
	85			x		2	2	4	
	86	x				1	4	4	*
	87			x		3	4	3	
	88			x		1	4	4	*
	89		x			1	3	3	
	90		x			4	4	1	
	91		x			1	4	2	
	92	x				4	4	4	
11	93			x		1	4	4	*
	94	x				2	3	2	
	95			x		1	4	4	
	96		x			1	3	3	
	97	x				1	4	3	
	98			x		1	1	3	Most students new/
	99	x				1	3	4	non believers
	100			x		3	4	4	

#8 Indicate type and frequency of student assignment before or after class (1-4)

(1=just about every week; 2=1-2 times a month; 3=1-2 times a quarter; 4=rarely/never)

Church No.	Teacher No.	Reading	Writing	Action	Reflctn	Memory Work	Tchr does Assnmnt?	Remarks
1	1*	1	4	4	4	4	Y	* answer given in X
	2	3	4	2	1	2	Y	instead of in number
	3	3	4	3	4	4	Y	value assigned: 1-2X=1
	4	1	4	3	3	4	N	3-4X=2
	5*	3	3	3	3	3	Y	5-6X=3
	6	1	4	2	1	1	N	blank=4
	7	3	3	2	4	2	Y	
	8	3	3	2	4	1	Y	
	9	4	4	4	2	2	Y	
	10	2	4	4	2	2	N	
	11	2	4	4	4	2	N	
	12	4	4	4	2	2	N	
	13	2	4	4	4	1	Y	
	14	1	4	4	4	2	N	
	15	4	4	4	4	4	Y	
	16	2	2	3	3	3	Y	
	17	4	4	3	2	2	Y	
	18	4	4	4	4	4	Y	
	19	2	4	3	1	1	Y	
	20	1	4	4	4	4	Y	
	21	2	4	2	2	1	Y	
	22	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	23	4	1	3	1	2	N	
	24	2	2	2	2	2	N	
	25	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	26	1	4	4	4	2	Y	
2	27	4	4	4	1	1	Y	
	28	1	4	4	4	4	N	
	29	1	4	1	1	3	Y	
	30	1	4	2	2	4	Y	
	31	4	4	2	2	3	Y	
	32	1	4	4	1	4	N	
	33	2	4	4	2	4	Y	
	34	4	4	1	4	4	Y	
	35*	1	4	4	4	4	Y	
3	36	2	2	4	3	3	Y	
	37	3	1	2	3	2	Y	
	38	2	4	2	2	1	Y	
	39	1	2	2	1	4	Y	
	40	3	4	4	1	4	Y	
	41	1	4	4	4	4	Y	
	42	1	3	1	1	4	Y	Younger peple more cooprtive
	43	1	4	4	4	4	Y	
4	44*	4	4	4	4	1	N	
	45	2	3	2	1	2	Y	
	46	3	4	3	3	3	N	
	47*	4	4	4	1	4	Y	
5	48	2	4	1	1	4	Y	
	49	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	50*	2	4	2	2	4	Y	

#8 Indicate type and frequency of student assignment before or after class (1-4)

(1=just about every week; 2=1-2 times a month; 3=1-2 times a quarter; 4=rarely/never)

Church No.	Teacher No.	Reading	Writing	Action	Reflctn	Memory Work	Tchr does Assnmnt?	Remarks
	51	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	52	1	4	4	4	4	N	
6	53	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	54	4	4	3	1	2	Y	
	55*	1	4	4	4	4	N	* answer given in X
	56	4	4	1	4	4	N	instead of in number
7	57	1	4	4	1	4	Y	value assigned: 1-2X=1
	58	1	1	2	2	4	Y	3-4X=2
	59	2	2	3	2	2	Y	5-6X=3
	60*	2	4	4	2	2	Y	blank=4
	61	1	1	1	1	4	Y	
	62	1	2	1	1	2	Y	
8	63	3	4	2	2	3	N	
	64	4	4	4	1	1	Y	
	65	1	4	4	4	4	N	
	66	1	2	2	2	3	N	
	67	1	4	4	1	4	Y	
	68	3	3	2	2	3	Y	
	69	2	3	2	2	2	Y	
	70	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	71	2	4	2	2	4	Y	
	72	1	3	2	2	4	Y	
9	73	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	74	3	4	3	3	3	Y	
	75	2	3	3	3	3	Y	
	76	2	4	3	3	4	Y	
	77	1	3	1	2	3	Y	
	78	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	79	4	4	4	4	2	N	
	80	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	81	2	3	1	2	2	Y	
	82*	1	4	4	1	4	N	
	83	4	4	2	1	3	Y	
	84	1	4	4	1	2	Y	Reading & memory work--
	85	2	4	4	4	4	Y	curriculum on spiritual maturity
10	86*	2	4	4	2	2	N	
	87	4	4	4	3	4	N	
	88	4	4	4	4	4	N	none
	89	3	4	4	4	4	Y	
	90	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	91	1	4	4	3	3	N	
	92	4	4	4	4	4	N	
	93	4	4	4	3	4	N	tcher to prepare well(1-7hrs)
	94	1	4	4	3	4	Y	student preparation optional
	95	1	4	3	4	4	N	God will show them the way
11	96	1	3	1	2	2	Y	
	97	1	1	3	3	1	Y	
	98	1	4	3	2	4	Y	
	99	1	4	1	1	1	Y	
	100	3	4	4	4	4	Y	

#9   Percentage of Students Practice What They Learn:

Church No.	Teacher No.	less than 10%	10-25%	25-50%	Over 50%	Remarks
1	1		x			
	2		x			
	3		x			
	4		x			
	5			x		
	6			x		
	7			x		
	8			x		
	9			x		
	10			x		
	11			x		
	12		x			
	13		x			
	14		x			
	15		x			
	16			x		
	17		x			
	18					Not known
	19			x		
	20		x			
	21		x			
	22			x		
	23			x		
	24	x				
	25			x		
	26			x		
2	27		x			
	28		x			
	29		x			
	30		x			
	31		x			
	32					Not known
	33			x		
	34		x			
	35			x		
3	36			x		
	37			x		
	38			x		
	39		x			
	40			x		
	41				x	Studnts come back each wk
	42			x		Havn't had chnce to knw stdnt
	43			x		
4	44					Not known
	45	x				
	46		x			
	47				x	
5	48			x		
	49			x		
	50		x			

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#9   Percentage of Students Practice What They Learn:

Church No.	Teacher No.	less than 10%	10-25%	25-50%	Over 50%	Remarks
6	51				x	
	52		x			
	53				x	
	54				x	
	55				x	
7	56		x			
	57		x			
	58		x			
	59		x			
8	60			x		
	61			x		
	62			x		
	63		x			
	64			x		
	65		x			
	66		x			
9	67				x	
	68			x		
	69			x		
	70		x			
	71			x		
	72			x		
	73		x			
	74			x		
	75			x		
	76			x		
	77				x	
	78			x		
	79		x			
	80		x			
	81				x	
10	82		x			Students are required to practice
	83			x		
	84				x	
	85			x		
	86	x				
	87		x			
	88	x				
	89		x			
	90		x			
	91		x			
	92				x	
11	93					Diffcit to detrmn. God prodcs frut.
	94		x			Tchr to be dlgnt; time prodcs result
	95			x		I teach practical traning class
	96		x			
	97			x		
	98			x		
	99		x			
	100		x			

#10 Identify area(s) of need for further training:

Church No.	Teacher No.	Lrn'g Ther/ Tch'g Mthd	Apply Truth	Narrtve	Psalm	Prophf	Wsdm	Gospl	Epistl	Revltn	Remarks
1	1										
	2									x	
	3					x	x			x	
	4									x	
	5	x	x	x	x	x					
	6	x	x							x	
	7			x		x				x	
	8									x	
	9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	10	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	11	x			x	x				x	
	12	x	x				x				
	13	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	14										
	15	x		x							
	16	x	x				x				
	17	x	x			x				x	
	18										
	19	x	x	x		x	x			x	
	20		x		x					x	
	21		x		x			x		x	
	22	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	
	23	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	24	x	x	x	x	x					
	25	x	x	x	x	x					
	26	x	x								
2	27	x									
	28	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	29		x			x				x	
	30	x	x								
	31	x				x				x	
	32		x			x			x		Conflct resltn
	33	x	x					x			All of above
	34		x								Pryr, Medttn
	35	x	x			x			x		& Sprtl dscpln
3	36	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	Use crrclm
	37	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Grpng stdnt
	38	x	x		x	x				x	
	39		x		x		x			x	
	40	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	41	x	x	x		x		x		x	
	42	x									
	43										
4	44	x	x								
	45	x			x					x	
	46	x	x								
	47	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
5	48	x	x			x				x	
	49	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	50	x	x				x			x	

#10 Identify area(s) of need for further training:

Church No.	Teacher No.	Lrn'g Theor Tch'g Mthd	Apply Truth	Narrtve	Psalm	Prophe	Wsdm	Gospl	Epistl	Revltn	Remarks
6	51										
	52		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
	53										
	54		x			x				x	
	55										
7	56		x			x				x	
	57	x	x								
	58	x	x								
	59		x		x					x	
8	60		x								
	61			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	62	x				x	x		x	x	
	63					x				x	
	64			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	65	x									
	66	x		x			x	x		x	
9	67	x								x	
	68	x	x								
	69	x	x		x	x	x			x	
	70	x	x								
	71	x	x				x			x	
	72	x									
	73		x			x					
	74		x			x	x			x	
	75	x	x						x	x	
	76	x				x				x	
	77						x			x	
	78		x								
	79		x								
	80		x		x		x				
	81	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	
10	82	x					x			x	
	83	x								x	
	84	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	All of above
	85	x									
	86		x	x							
	87		x				x			x	
	88	x	x			x					
	89	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
	90			x		x		x	x	x	
	91	x	x				x				
	92										
11	93			x							Parables
	94	x		x			x			x	
	95	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	All needed
	96	x									
	97	x				x				x	
	98				x	x					
	99	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	
	100	x	x								

APPENDIX B

WORKSHEETS

#1: Narrative

#2: Wisdom

#3: Prophetic

#4: Application

#5: Teaching

Worksheet #1	**Workshop Notes**	**Exercise**

Literary Characteristics

Scenes   a.   <u>2 Sam 18:19-32</u>

   Descriptive motion   _____   _____

   Fast motion   _____   _____

   Close up view   _____   _____

   Panoramic view   _____   _____

   Type scene   _____   _____

Narration   b.   <u>Gen 11:1-9</u>

   Authorial comment   _____   _____

   Description   _____   _____

   Straight narration   _____   _____

   Direct discourse   _____   _____

   Omniscience   _____   _____

   Unobstrusiveness   _____   _____

Repetitions   c.   <u>2 Sam 18:24-32</u>
   Word/Phrase/Action
   and Emphasis

Other techniques   d.   <u>2 Sam 18:19-19:8</u>

   Irony   _____   _____

   Suspense   _____   _____

   Hyperbole   _____   _____

Worksheet #1

Structure

Exercise

e. 2 Sam 18:19-19:7

Plot

Sam 18:1-18

f. 2 Sam 18:19-19:7

Worksheet #1   Workshop Notes   Exercise

Characterization

David   **g.** Joab

Contexts

Literary

Absalom's Revolt   **h.** 2 Sam 15:1-14

Succession Narrative   **j.** Discuss relationship between
                                             2 Sam 18:33 and 12:9-12

Worksheet #1   **Exercise**

Literary

k. Deuteronomistic History: Evaluate David's kingship in light of 1 Sam 8

    8:11-12 (cf.9:9-10; 15:1; 18:1 & 1 Kgs 1:5)

    8:16-17 (cf. 20:24; 1 Kgs 12:16-20)

    8:19-20 (cf, 15:2-6; 2 Sam 11 and 18)

l. **Historical:** Discuss how the passage speaks to the following communities of God's people
Exilic

    Post-Exilic

    New Testament Community

m. **Theological Theme and Message**

Worksheet #2   **Workshop Notes**   **Exercise**
Literary Characteristics

Nature & Experience   a. Identify the concept to be learned
                                                                from Proverbs 12:21 and how Job
                                                                would have responded.

                                                            Identify the lesson to be learned from
                                                            nature in the poem in Eccl 1:3-11

Observation and Reflection   b. Identify the verbal clues to observation,
                                                                reflection & conclusion with its reasons
                                                                in Eccl 1:3-11

Worksheet #2   **Workshop Notes**   **Exercise**

Proverbs & Sayings   **c.** Explain the main point of the following:
                    Prov 26:21

                    Prov 16:32

                    Prov 30:32-33

d. Compare and contrast Prov 16:16 and Eccl 9:16

Poetry   **e.** Identify the basic ingredients of the
                    didactic poem in Prov 4:20-27

Disputation

f. Identify the thesis, counter-thesis and arguments in Job 4:7; 8:3 & 9:17, 22-24; 10:7 & 11:6

_____

_____

_____

Worksheet #2
Didactic Narrative

Royal Testament

Structure & Content   **Exercise**

g. Identify key words common to A & A' and discuss how the two sections correspond to each other

h. Identify the reasons for Qoheleth's 3-fold conclusion and how they affect his attitude toward work in B:

j. Discuss Qoheleth's reflection on wisdom and death, and how it affect his attitude toward work and life:

Worksheet #2

Contexts

Literary: **Workshop Notes**

  Framing in the book of Ecclesiastes:

Exercise

k. Identify key words common to B & B' and discuss how they correspond to each other:

l. Discuss how the key word "goodness" in G should be read in light of its frame of 6:10-12 and 7:13-14:

m. Discuss the relationship between Qoheleth's conclusion about goodness and his joy statement (2:24):

n. Summarize the wisdom theme in the book of Ecclesiastes:

Worksheet #2   <u>Exercise</u>

Literary:

o. Analyze the structural organization pattern of the book of Proverbs based on the titles in these verses:
1:1; 10:1; 22:17; 24:23; 25:1; 30:1 and 31:1.

Workshop Notes: Discover the wisdom theme of the book of Proverbs by comparing the portraits of wisdom in 1:8-9:18 and 31:10-31 as presented by McCreesh.

p. Analyze the structural organization pattern of the book of Job based on content and sub-genres:

ch 1-2

ch 3

ch 4-27

ch 28

ch 29-31

ch 32-37

ch 38-42:6

ch 42:7-17

Worksheet #2   Exercise

Literary:

q. Find the wisdom theme of Job by summarizing each of the chapters 28-31, then contrast 28 with 29-31:

ch 28 _____

ch 29 _____

ch 30 _____

ch 31 _____

Contrast between 28 and 29-31:

r. Summarize the wisdom theme in the three books: Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes:

Historical:

Post-exilic: see Seow (20-26)

s. New Testament Community:

t. Theological theme and Message

Worksheet #3
Literary Characteristics

Workshop Notes

Exercise

Judgment speech

Against Individual:	Isa 39:3-7	a.	Isa 37:21-29
Accusation/reason	_____		_____
Announcement/result	_____		_____
Against Israel:	Isa 8:5-8	b.	Isa 30:12-14
Accusation/reason	_____		_____
Announcement/result	_____		_____
Against foreign nation:	Isa 10:5-7, 12-15	c.	Isa 7:5-8
Accusation/reason	_____		_____
Announcement/result	_____		_____
=Salvation for Israel	_____		_____

Woe oracle

	Isa 5:8-17	d.	Isa 5:18-24
Accusation	_____		_____
Doom announcement	_____		_____

Worksheet #3   **Workshop Notes**   **Exercise**
Salvation speech

Present deliverance: e. Isa 37:5-7

  Threat/danger   _____

  Deliverance/sign   _____

Future blessing: Isa 11:11-16   Isa 35:1-10

  God turning/coming   _____   _____

  Restoration   _____   _____

In Deutero-Isaiah:

                          Isa 43:1-7   f.   Isa 44:1-5

  Call of reassurance   _____   _____

  Basis of reassurance   _____   _____

  Future basis   _____   _____

Announcement of a Royal Savior

                                              g. Isa 9:2-7

Chaos in the land   _____

His coming and names   _____

His rule   _____

Worksheet #3
Trial Oracle

Workshop Notes   **Exercise**

<u>Isa 1:2-20</u>   **h.**   <u>Isa 5:1-7</u>

Call for witnesses   _____   _____

Accusation   _____   _____

Rhetorical questions   _____   _____

Appeal for proceeding   _____   _____

Verdict/Admonition   _____   _____
Disputation

<u>Isa 49:14-21</u>   **j.**   <u>Isa 10:5-15</u>

Thesis   _____   _____

Counter-thesis   _____   _____

Dispute   _____   _____
Vocation Account

k. <u>Isa 6</u>

Divine confrontation   _____

Introductory word   _____

Commission   _____

Objection by prophet   _____

Reassurance   _____

Sign   _____

Worksheet #3
Vision Report

Exercise I. Isa 6

The prophet "saw" _____

"And behold!" _____

Scenes/sounds/actions _____

Image Cluster   **Workshop Notes**

Sexual Relationship   Animals

Act I _____ _____

Act II _____ _____

Act III _____ _____

Act IV _____ _____

Vineyard   Drinking of Wine

Act I _____ _____

Act II _____ _____

Act III _____ _____

Act IV _____ _____

Exercise III. Isa 5:1-7

Vineyard _____

Drinking of Wine _____

Animals _____

Worksheet #3   **Workshop Notes**

Structure & Content

  Song of the Vineyard

Woe Oracle   1st Series—5:8-17

                        Sin   Meaning

Accusation: _____   _____

                _____   _____

Doom Announcement:

  1. Cause: _____

  2. Consequence: _____

                    Exercise   **n. 2nd Series—5:18-24**

                        Sin   Meaning

Accusation: _____   _____

                _____   _____

                _____   _____

                _____   _____

Doom Announcement: _____

  Cause: _____

o. Military Attack (5:25-30)

  Anger described: _____

  Punishment   _____

  Anger described: _____

  Punishment   _____

Worksheet #3   **Workshop Notes**

Contexts

  2 Significant Events:

Literary: 1   _____

        2-4   _____

        5   _____

        5:1-7   _____

        5:8-24   _____

        5:25-30   _____

        6:1-9   _____

        9:8-10:34   _____

        9:8-10:4   _____

        10:5-19   _____

        10:20-34   _____

        11 to12   _____

        11   _____

        12   _____

Worksheet #3

Literary:

Corresponding Section   Completion of His Work (9:8-10:4)

1. The Lord's judgment
2. The people's sin/reaction toward judgment
3. Refrain: the Lord's still outstretched hand

p. Identify 1 and 2 in the following literary units:

9:8-12   1 _____

             2 _____

9:13-17   1 _____

             2 _____

9:18-21   1 _____

             2 _____

10:1-4   1 _____

             2 _____

Destruction of the Assyrians (10:5-19)   **Workshop Notes**

Deliverance of a Remnant (10:20-34)

Worksheet #3   **Workshop Notes**

Literary:

   State of Restoration

     Chapter 11

     Chapter 12

Relationship with Chapter 1

Similar messages:

Purpose of Judgment Speech:

Purpose of Judgment for Israel/Judah:

Summary

Worksheet #3 {#ws}

q. Historical:

Pre-exilic:

Post-exilic:

New Testament Community:

r. Theological Theme and Message

Worksheet #4   **Workshop Notes**   <u>Response</u>

The Goal of Christian Education

The Goal:

The Assessment:

   Relationship with God   **a.**

   Relationship with people   **b.**

   Relationship with the world   **c.**

d. Identify the tasks of the Christian Educator.

Worksheet #4

Workshop Notes

The Learners' Experience

Academic & Economic Achievements:

e.

Experience:

Spiritual Issue:

Discrimination

f.

Experience:

Spiritual issue:

Worksheet #4   Workshop Notes   Response

Intergenerational Conflicts   g.

Experience:

Spiritual Issue:

Poverty & Social Injustice   h.

Experience:

Spiritual issue:

Worksheet #4   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

A Process for Application

Create a supportive community: j.

Make a realistic assessment: k.

Academic & Economic Achievements:

Discrimination:

Worksheet #4   Workshop Notes   Response

Make a realistic assessment: k.

Intergenerational Conflicts:

Poverty and Social Injustice

Apply the sample passages: Workshop Notes

Worksheet #4   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Apply the sample passages:

Consequences of Unresolved Family Conflicts   l.

 Parallel life situations

Lesson Goal:

What Are Your Pursuits in Life?   m.

 Parallel life situations

Lesson Goal:

Living in the Presence of a Holy God   n.

 Parallel life situations

Lesson Goal:

Worksheet #5   Workshop Notes   Group Discussion/Sharing
Educational Theories of Learning

Andragogy

a.   Potential for application

Praxis

b.   Potential for application

Learning Styles

c.   Personal learning style

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Principles of Learning/Teaching (Instructor to supply illustrations)

The cognitive Domain

     Factual Knowledge: **d.**

     Understanding: **e.**

The Affective Domain   **f.**

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Teaching Methods (Workshop participants to be given resources for presentation, individually or in teams)

Lecture   g.

   Teacher's Role/Preparation

   Guidelines for Effective Use

Worksheet #5

Worksheet #5	**Workshop Notes**	**Response**
Discussion	h.	
Teacher's Role/Preparation		

Guidelines for Effective Use

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Debate   j.

   Teacher's Role/Preparation

   Guidelines for Effective Use

Paradox   k.

   Teacher's Role/Preparation

   Guidelines for Effective Use

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Teaching Methods (Workshop participants to be given resources for presentation, individually or in teams)

Case Study   L

   Teacher's Role/Preparation

   Guidelines for Effective Use

Action Reflection   m.

   Teacher's Role/Preparation

   Guidelines for Effective Use

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Life Story   n.

  Teacher's Role/Preparation

  Guidelines for Effective Use

Creative Writing   o.

  Teacher's Role/Preparation

  Guidelines for Effective Use

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**
The Teaching/Learning Process

Teaching Methods Compatible with Literary Genres
    Narrative   **p.**

    Wisdom   **q.**

    Prophets   **r.**

Worksheet #5   **Workshop Notes**   **Response**

Lesson Plan Compatible with

the Goal of Christian Education   s.

  Introduction

Observation

Interpretation

Reflection

Action

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